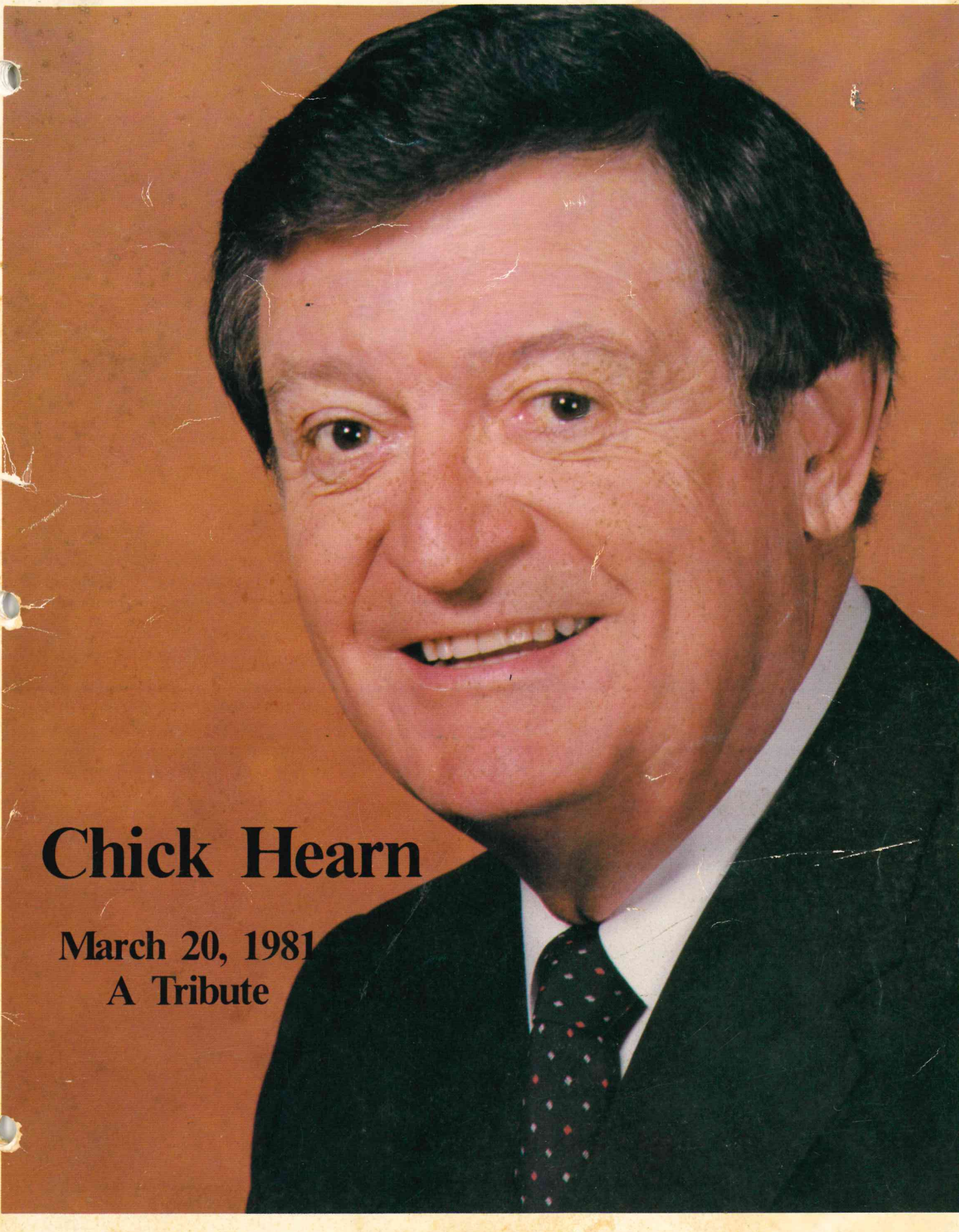


A color portrait photograph of Chick Hearn, a man with dark hair, smiling, wearing a dark suit, white shirt, and a dark tie with small red and white polka dots. The photo is mounted on a light-colored, textured card with three binder holes on the left side.

Chick Hearn

March 20, 1981

A Tribute

1960-61 Los Angeles LAKERS



Standing (L-R): Jerry West, Hot Rod Hundley, Ron Johnson, Tom Hawkins, Frank Selvy, Bob Leonhard
Seated (L-R): Coach Fred Schaus, Elgin Baylor, Jim Krebs, Ray Felix, Rudy LaRusso, Howie Joliff, Trainer Frank O'Neil

Twenty Years Of Experience!

1980-81 Los Angeles LAKERS



Standing (L-R): Coach Paul Westhead, Asst. Coach Pat Riley, Eddie Jordan, Butch Carter, Mark Landsberger, Jim Brewer, Alan Hardy, Brad Holland, Trainer Jack Curran, Asst. Coach Mike Thibault
Seated (L-R): Dr. Jerry Buss, Mike Cooper, Jamaal Wilkes, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, Earvin Johnson, Jim Chones, Norm Nixon, General Manager Bill Sharman

Chick Hearn Night
March 20, 1981

SOUVENIR BOOK

Published By The
Chick Hearn Night Committee
Chris Riley & Gladyce Paben
Co-Chairman

Pidge Burack	Bruce Jolesch
Ed Desser	Rachael Kerlan
Roy Englebrecht	Mary Lou Liebich
Mike Frankovich	Sharon Tol
	Karen West

Bruce Jolesch, Editor

Contributors

Mitch Chortkoff, Dan Hafner, Bill Libby, Doug Ives, Rich Levin, Steve Springer, Paul McLean, Dan Murr, Jim Murray, John Hall, Wen Roberts, Beau Riffenburgh.

©Copyright 1981 by
Chick Hearn Committee

Rod Hundley, Master of Ceremonies

Special Thanks To:

Karem Abdul-Jabbar	Walter Mathau
Elgin Baylor	Jack Nicholson
Lou Baumeister	Dr. Larry Paben
Rob Collins	Gene Price
Keith Erickson	Pat Riley
Brenda Fleeks	Wen Roberts
Cynthia Forney	Claire Rothman
Rosemary Garmon	Bill Sharman
Keith Harris	Bob Steiner
Dr. Robert Kerlan	Pete Weber
John Lindscott	Jerry West

Participants

Fun Foods	Mark C. Bloom
Servomation	Cribari Wines
California Jewelsmith	KHJ-Television
Princess Cruises	KLCA Radio
Photography, Inc.	Toyota
B & S Printing	Marriott Hotels, Inc.
Curtis Lentz	Santa Monica Stationers
KABC	Great Western Savings
Packers Bar M	Edward & Edward Limo

Cover Photo by Photography, Inc.

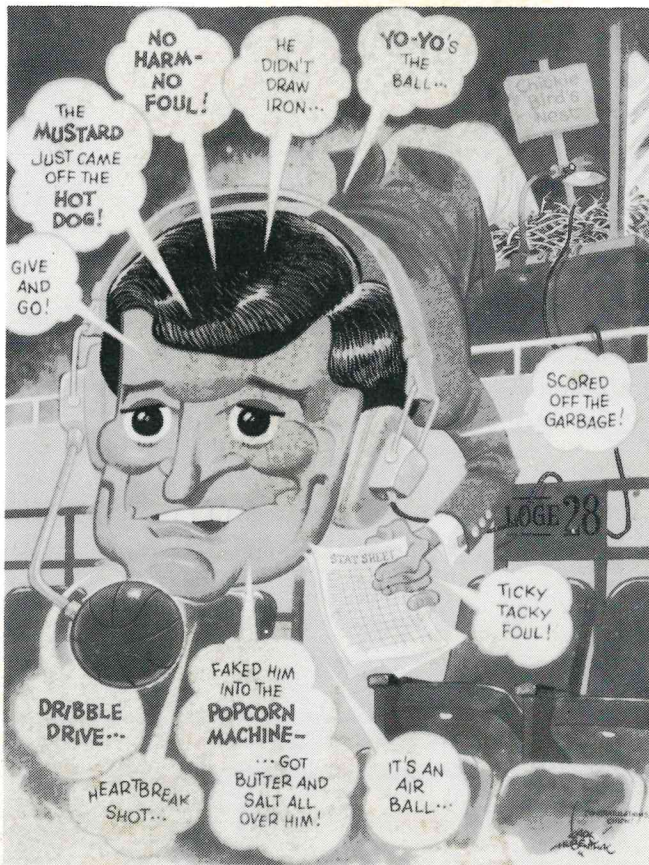
Calligraphy on page 2 by Jim Moroney; on inside back cover by Cynthia Forney.
Typesetting/Production by Cheryl Watson, Carol Bergdoll, Regina Lin, Ric Scozzari—Lina Graphics, Los Angeles, California.
Printing by Kellow-Brown Company, Los Angeles, California.

This program book is dedicated to our good friend Chick Hearn with congratulations to the best play-by-play announcer in the history of basketball.

A "Chick Hearn Night" is long overdue, and this night is a token of appreciation of your 20 years as the "Voice of the Lakers," providing some of the finest and most exciting moments in NBA basketball history.

We consider it a privilege and an honor to have been a part of your "Night."

Chris Riley & Gladyce Paben



Caricature by Karl Hubenthal

Karl Hubenthal has been Editorial Cartoonist for the Los Angeles Herald-Examiner since 1951.

His cartoons have been placed on display at such places as The White House, National Portrait Gallery in London, Smithsonian Institute, Miami's Lowe Art Museum, The Chicago Art Institute and the National Portrait Gallery in Washington, D.C.

Seven times Karl has been nominated for the "Reuben" Award (the cartoonists "Oscar") and three times he has been awarded the honor of Best Editorial Cartoon.

Some of his other honors include the Freedoms Foundation Medals, the National Headliner's Club Award, and the Helm's Foundation Medal. His work is in the permanent collection of four past Presidents and the Library of Congress.

Hubenthal is married and the father of two daughters.

The Chick Hearn Committee and its members would like to express their warm thanks to Dr. Jerry Buss for his generosity and complete cooperation in making this evening an outstanding success.

A Tribute To My Good Friend Chick

On this very special "Chick Isearn Night"
The Forum sure is humming;
But who deserves it more than you,
It's been a long time coming.

Vin Scully's been called the "Chick Isearn" of Baseball
Cosell the "Chick Isearn" of fights
For a small town boy from Aurora
That's really scaling the heights

I'd like to list your "coined" phrases
But there's far too many to print;
I know you've produced more "coinage"
Than any U.S. Mint

It's amazing how accurately you can "call" a game
From a seat so high you've paled;
You give a "bird's eye" view from a "bird's high" pew.
Your eyes have never failed.

With the eye's of an owl, you'll spot a foul
And inform us with the speed of a missile;
And all this is done with the teams on the run
And before the ref can blow his whistle.

A speedy tongue is your forte
Fast talking is your motto;
You spit out words to the rhythm of
A machine gun staccato

I was informed of your recent physical,
The doctors said they were aghast;
They couldn't believe any human
Could possess a tongue that fast.

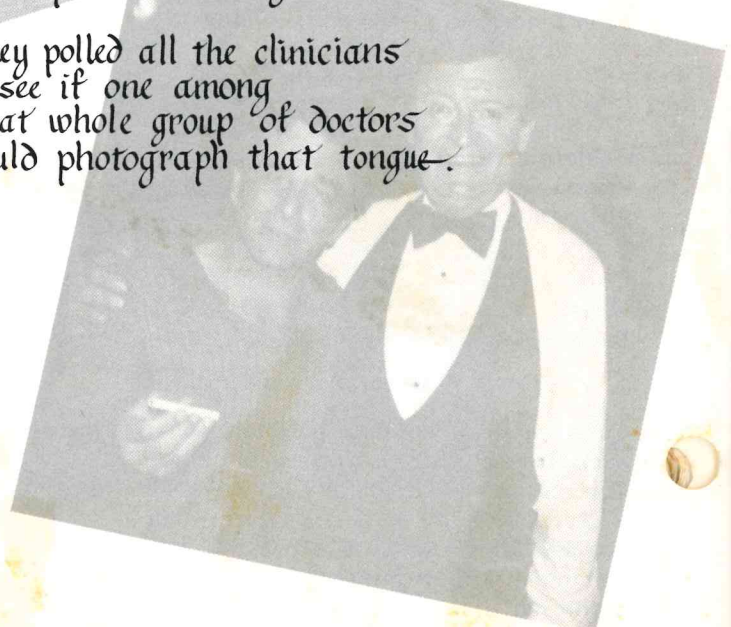
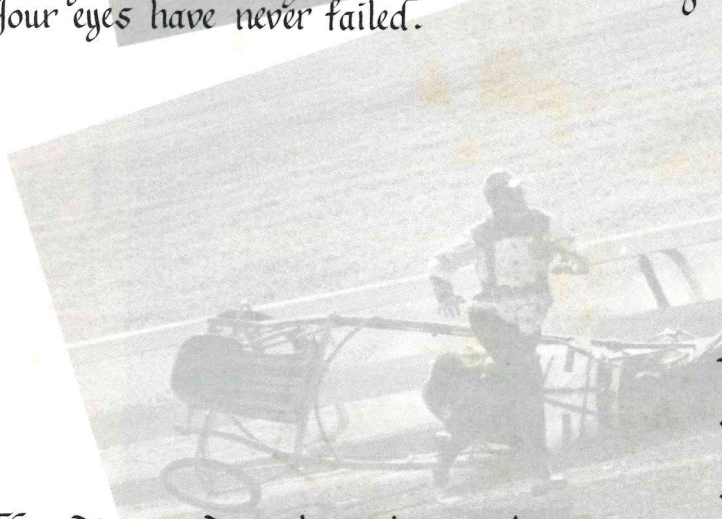
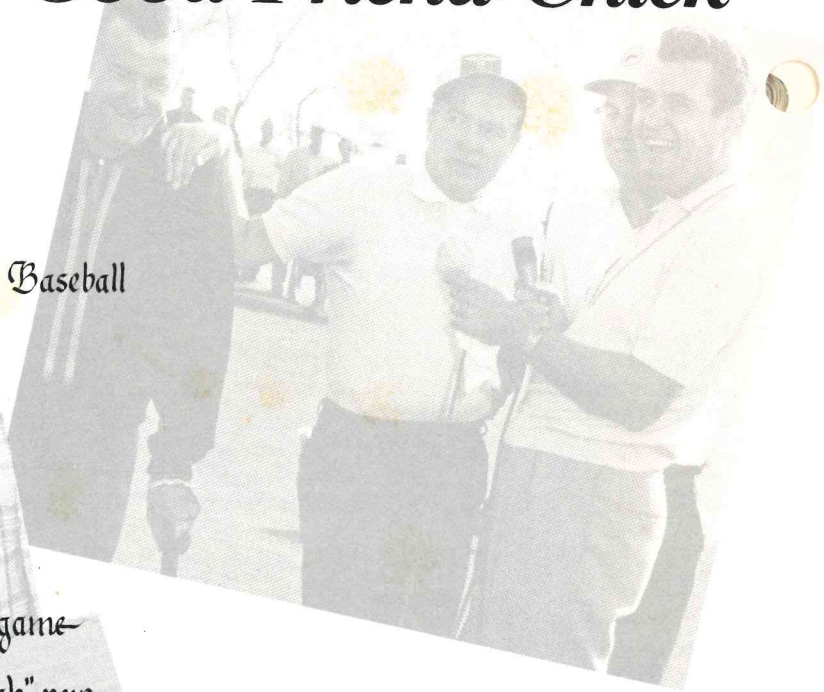
They polled all the clinicians
To see if one among
That whole group of doctors
Could photograph that tongue.

They discovered a physical anomaly
Extremely rare, ~ ~ indeed;
But decided against tongue surgery
Cause it would curtail the speed

The doctors will publish their findings,
But have confided to me (and friends);
That damned tongue is fastened in the middle,
And vibrates at both ends.

So here's a toast to my good friend,
Enjoy your special day;
You really deserve all the accolades
Cause you're the best in the U.S.A.

~ L.J. "Painless" Paben, D.D.S.
(team dentist)





CALIFORNIA SPORTS THE FORUM BOX 10 INGLEWOOD CAL 90306 (213) 674-6000

March 20, 1981

Dear Chick:

Congratulations to you on this, your night. It's impossible to think of anyone more deserving of it than you.

You helped to pioneer professional basketball from the time the Lakers became the first NBA team on the West Coast. You nurtured it through an era when few knew, or cared about, the Lakers. Through your efforts, the Lakers soon became a big story in Los Angeles. Yes, Elgin Baylor and Jerry West were great players, but no one would have known were it not for you.

I consider myself an enthusiastic fan who has been fortunate enough to find himself in a position to own and run teams. You are a basketball fan who obviously enjoys every aspect of your work. The Laker fans appreciate that and so do I. Your enthusiasm is a gift which has never left you. You make every game an event. Along with you, I have coaxed the Lakers through many exhilarating triumphs. Similarly, I have lamented the defeats.

To many people, the Lakers and Chick Hearn are inseparable. You helped create the mystique and thus have become a part of it. Fans don't bring their transistor radios to the games to listen to music. They want to hear you lecture on the vagaries of basketball. Never has there been a more entertaining or informative professor.

Sincerely,

Jerry H. Buss

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

March 9, 1981

Dear Chick:

Nancy and I are delighted to send our best wishes and warmest personal regards as your family, friends, and fans gather to honor your achievements as a broadcaster for the Los Angeles Lakers.

We know that "Chick Hearn Night" will be a very special occasion, one filled with memories you will always treasure.

You have repeatedly demonstrated excellence in sports broadcasting, setting new standards for quick, clear, and objective descriptions of "play-by-play" action. The game on the court is never more alive, colorful, and exciting than when you "call 'em as you see 'em." For all fans, but especially for young people, your fair-minded approach to basketball sets a fine example.

Again, congratulations and good luck in the future.

Sincerely,

Ronald Reagan

Mr. Chick Hearn
Los Angeles Lakers
Inglewood, California 90306



NATIONAL BASKETBALL ASSOCIATION

OLYMPIC TOWER • 645 FIFTH AVENUE • NEW YORK, N. Y. 10022 • 212-826-7000

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

February 18, 1981

Mr. Chick Hearn
Los Angeles Lakers
P.O. Box 10
Inglewood, California 90306

Dear Chick:

Greatness is achieved at various positions in the NBA.

It can be achieved on the court as a player...on the bench as a coach...in the front office as a general manager...or behind the microphone.

There have been many star players, coaches and general managers in the League's 35-year history, but few broadcasters/telecasters have achieved stardom. I am happy to say that you, Chick Hearn, belong to the very select group who have achieved star status as a sports broadcaster par excellence.

For more than 20 years, you have been the "Voice of the Lakers," the man millions have relied upon on radio and television to provide objective reporting of Lakers' games. You have become as much a part of the team as Jerry West, Elgin Baylor, Wilt Chamberlain, Kareem or Magic.

We thank you for bringing us more than 20 years of professional reporting, and wish you the best of luck for another 20 years of service behind the microphone.

Cordially,

Lawrence F. O'Brien

LFOB/gmd



by **MITCH CHORTKOFF**

It's been a perfect marriage for 21 years.

Chick Hearn can broadcast a basketball game better than any man alive. He also has a profound love for the sport. And the Los Angeles Lakers are among the foremost organizations in the NBA.

Put them together, and you have a bonanza enjoyed by the Southern California audience through more than 1,000 games, through three Laker owners, through the Sports Arena and Forum eras, through championship years and thoroughly disappointing ones.

He has entertained you, informed you, and maybe even brought a tear to your eye from time to time.

But who is this man?

It depends on who you ask.

To the fan, he's the voice in the booth, always there to describe the action of a Laker game.

To wife Marge and daughter Samantha, he's a devoted family man.

To sportswriters, he's the good humor guy in the traveling party, the one with a ready quip to brighten any road trip.

Yet he also goes out of his way to care when my girl friend has a cold ("How's Barbara? She was sniffing at the game last night"). When the wife of Herald-Examiner Laker writer Richard Levin damaged her foot in an auto accident several years ago, Chick wanted daily updates on Susan's condition.

To coaches he's also a good friend, yet they're amazed how he can broadcast, coach,

Chick Hearn:

referee and almost play the game from high up in his booth while simultaneously keeping up with all other contests in progress throughout the league.

Yup, he's a truly amazing fella with more enthusiasm for his work than anyone I've ever seen.

"That's what I noticed the most when I worked as his color man for seven years," remembers Lynn Shackelford, now the sports anchor man on Channel 9.

"No matter the outcome of the game, he'd be up early the next morning reading the box scores, figuring out the schedule, being one step ahead of everyone else."

There are no "dog days" in the season for Chick. Every game is special. The worst time is killing afternoons on the road, wishing tipoff time was here.

Once there was an Academy-Award nominee movie playing next door to our hotel. I thought Chick might enjoy it. I was wrong.

"Oh, I might go," he said. "That would get me three hours closer to the game."

It seems like he's always done Laker games, always been a broadcaster. But such is not the case.

"Actually, he got into it quite by accident," recalls long-time partner Marge.

"He has many other jobs, like salesman for a drug company and credit analysis for Dunn & Bradstreet."

During World War II, Sgt. Hearn of special services was asked to organize a touring baseball team and then ordered to help with the broadcasts when nobody else was available.

"...his talent is not only his strong voice or his ability to talk fast. He has the rarest ability to anticipate correctly in a fast-paced sport..."

That led to work with a small station in his hometown of Aurora, Illinois, followed by play-by-play for Bradley University basketball and an eventual move to Los Angeles in 1956, the infant years of the Lakers.

He has been with the organization ever since although also establishing himself in many

The Man Behind the Microphone

other sports. He has a bowling show that lasted many years beyond the normal life-cycle for such a format. Even now, he enjoys working soccer games in the summer, college basketball in-between in his Laker schedule.

He is a professional traveler who makes it a personal challenge to welcome any newcomer to the Laker scene.

When one writer lost his airline ticket earlier this season, he dreaded most revealing to Chick that he had not been proficient in this area. The newspaper he could deal with, but being the butt of Chick's jokes until somebody else goofed up would be the most severe penalty.

Also, pity the poor public relations man who once picked up a piece of broadcast equipment that belonged to the Houston Summit and brought it to the airport the next day.

Hearn quickly phoned the arena office and assured them the device was not taken on purpose and would be returned.

And, to the P.R. man in Chick's piercing but

good-natured way:

"If you see the TV truck, remember it belongs to the Rockets also. Don't drive it to Los Angeles."

One moment he's like that and the next one he's worrying about the fact San Antonio beat Dallas last night and now is within $\frac{1}{2}$ game of the Lakers in the overall standings.

"I don't understand," says trainer Jack Curran. "San Antonio isn't even in our division."

"Playoff position," says Chick. "We might have to play them somewhere down the line. Homecourt is so important."

The coaches might be worried about that too, but no more than Chick. Every aspect of Laker life gains his complete attention.

"I don't think he'll ever retire," says Marge. "This is so much of his life. I haven't missed many games either over the years. It's very much of both of our lives."

Chick's talent is not only his strong voice or his ability to talk fast. He has the rarest ability to anticipate correctly in a fast-paced sport.

When the whistle blows, he'll usually describe the foul before the referee confirms his choice. Contrast that to so many of the announcers working other games. See how often they guess incorrectly. Chick's advantage is a remarkable instinct for the game that goes beyond his capabilities as a speaker.

He's from the old school in the areas of dressing well, being polite, respecting others. Often he'll state a thought, but preface it with the words "At least, in my opinion." A little thing maybe, but to me it's something that separates a gentleman from a know-it-all. If you have an opposite thought, he wants to hear it.

I've heard a general criticism of broadcasters over the years that they don't listen as well as they talk. I've seen they type, all right, in my travels.

Maybe the nicest thing I can say about Chick is that he listens very well. Oh, he wants to be heard when he talks, but he takes his turn at listening too.

I'm proud to say he's been my friend through the 21 years of the Los Angeles Lakers.

It's wonderful that they're honoring him with a Chick Hearn Night. I can assure you he will appreciate it the rest of his life.

A consecutive games streak in any sport is a dubious achievement. Chick Hearn has currently broadcasted over 1,400 consecutive games. A few years back, when he hit 1,000 the Lakers honored him and presented Chick with a basketball commemorating the achievement.



Some Fond Memories

A tribute to Chick Hearn is overdue. Chick Hearn has been to the Lakers what Vin Scully has been to the Dodgers. As much as the pitching of Sandy Koufax, the hitting of Tommy Davis and the baserunning of Maury Wills, Scully's announcing played a part in the popularity of the Dodgers. It was the same way with Chick and the Lakers.

Over the years the Lakers have been blessed with a greater number of the really outstanding players than any other National Basketball Association team. Yet, it is doubtful if any of those players contributed any more than Chick to the increase in interest in Southern California in basketball in general and in the Lakers, in particular.

His colorful, inimitable style has graced

Laker broadcasts and telecasts since the 1961 playoffs, the conclusion of the team's first season in Los Angeles. In all the time since, Chick has missed only two broadcasts.

There are many radio listeners and television viewers who have been raised on Chick Hearn's broadcasting. Most of them undoubtedly believe such expressions as Words-Eye View, Yo-Yoing the Dribble, It Counts If It Goes, No Harm, No Foul and Faked Into the Popcorn Machine — to name just a few — are a long-time part of basketball lexicon, when in reality they are the product of Chick's fertile mind.

It takes more than colorful descriptive phrases to make a good play-by-play announcer. With the possible exception of hockey, professional basketball is the toughest game to broadcast. It is a game of nonstop action at full speed. I have heard many pro basketball announcers, but I never heard one who could compare with Chick. I learned to appreciate his accuracy when the Lakers played at the Sports Arena and Chick was on the floor, right on top of the action. But it never ceases to amaze me that from high up in The Forum, he is every bit as accurate in his description of what is taking place on the floor.

The younger generation associates Chick only with Laker basketball. But in truth, he long ago established himself as one of the most versatile announcers, as well as one of the best. He was not just versatile and good, either. He was a man always on the go. It was not at all unusual for him to announce a football game in Texas in the afternoon and arrive in Los Angeles in time to broadcast a Laker game at night. There were times in his career when it seemed he spent most of his time in airports, airplanes, helicopters or behind a motorcycle escort speeding him to an airport for a quick



Chick ready for another road trip.

trip to somewhere.

Chick began his broadcasting career in Peoria, Illinois, and his debut as a play-by-play announcer apparently set the tempo for his career. The announcer scheduled to broadcast the Sweet Sixteen tournament, the Illinois state high school basketball tournament, was taken ill. Chick was hurriedly summoned to Champaign. In his first turn at the mike, it was as if he would never let go. He broadcast *eight* consecutive games, beginning in the morning and winding up late at night. Chick has been a nonstop talker — both on and off the mike — ever since.

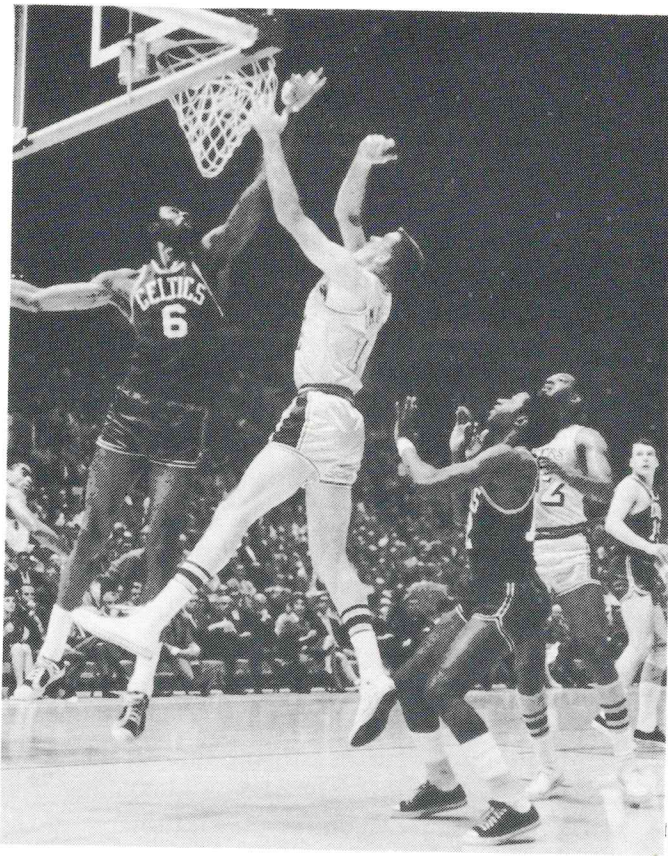
As a bright young sportscaster for CBS, he was brought to Los Angeles in 1956 to broadcast USC football and do a radio sports show. Chick and I began nearly a quarter century association that September in Austin, Texas when Chick broadcast the Trojans' surprisingly easy victory over Texas, a win made possible by the powerful running of C.R. Robers.

When Chick first made his presence known on the local sports scene, the Lakers were in Minneapolis, and there was no broadcast of USC basketball games. He persuaded a prominent USC alumnus, Jack McDonald, to round up a sponsor and Chick started broadcasting the Trojan home games. He also did the UCLA home games.

NBC was impressed with young Mr. Hearn's talent and they offered him a twice nightly 15-minute television show. It was quite different from what the current crop of sportscasters do. Most of them would be in trouble if they had to do even a five minute show without the aid of live action film. All Chick had were a few still shots and his thorough knowledge of sports. He would do his nightly sports show on KNX radio, actually run down the street a block and do his television show on Channel 4.

At this time Chick also proved himself to be an outstanding master of ceremonies and a much-in-demand after dinner speaker. He so impressed me at a UCLA awards banquet that I still remember one of his funny stories. It went like this:

There were two brothers of ill repute named Joe and John Williams in a community near Peoria. One night they decided to steal the prize pig on exhibit at the county fair. They grabbed the pig, tossed in the back of their car and took off down the highway. Police hastily set up roadblocks. As they approached a roadblock, the brothers frantically threw a coat



Action from the late 60's—Darrell Imhoff going against Bill Russell. Another Lakers-Celtics game that Chick recalls so well.

around the pig, set him up in the back seat and shoved a hat down on his head. When they stopped, the officer stuck his flashlight into the car and asked their names. He allowed them to continue. The officer turned to his partner and said:

"Joe and John Williams are all right, but I'll tell you, that Oink Williams is the ugliest fellow I ever saw."

It was while in Seattle for a USC-Washington game that Chick first met Elgin Baylor, who was to become the first of the great basketball players Chick helped immortalize. At a luncheon, an old friend from Peoria days, John Castellani, then coaching Seattle University, begged Chick to come see 'a fantastic basketball player.'

"I really didn't want to go," Chick recalled, "but John was so persistent I finally agreed. As we walked into Castellani's office, a dirty, cluttered little room in a rickety old gym, there was this handsome, long-legged youngster lounging in a chair. 'My back aches, I've got a sore right leg and my ankle's swollen,' he told the coach. 'I don't think I can practice today.' Castellani introduced me as the CBS radio announcer from Los Angeles who was going to

talk about him on network radio. Baylor jumped up and said, 'I'll be ready in a couple of minutes.' He proceeded to put on a demonstration of individual basketball skills the likes of which I had never seen. There could be no doubt, I had seen someone special."

Before he joined the Lakers, Chick was doing golf and horse racing on network television for NBC and also doing USC football and basketball games. His association with the Lakers began with a 2 a.m. Sunday phone call in March, 1961. Owner Bob Short, who literally brought the team here on a shoestring, was calling to ask Chick to fly to St. Louis to broadcast Monday night's fifth game of the playoffs with the St. Louis Hawks. Short admitted, after Chick agreed, that he had hired him without even having an outlet.

Although they couldn't get a television station on such short notice, the game was broadcast over KNX. It was really the beginning of success for the Lakers. They had been averaging only about 5,000 fans. But when they returned for the sixth game of the playoffs, they drew 15,000 and the biggest NBA gate at that time (\$55,000 gross). The next season Chick broadcast about 50 Laker games and, in a couple of years, he was doing them all. It has been a lasting love affair. Come hell, snow or highwater, Chick has been there.

He missed one game in Las Vegas on a Saturday night because, after broadcasting an NCAA football game at Fayetteville, Arkansas, and getting a police escort to the airport, the ceiling was so low the chartered Lear jet could not take off. Another time he missed one because the Lakers were playing the second game of a doubleheader at St. Louis. At the time, his first obligation was to NBC and he had to be in Palm Springs the next day to do the Bob Hope Golf Classic. It started to snow and the forecast was for much more. So Chick rushed to the airport and caught the last plane out for Los Angeles, missing a Laker broadcast for only the second time.

Before you get the idea Chick is perfect, let me tell you a little about the imperfect Mr. Hearn. He is a pessimist and something of an alarmist. The fabulous Jerry West seemed to take the hardest, loudest and worst-looking falls of anyone who ever played basketball. Invariably, after Jerry would go crashing to the floor, Chick would have them calling for an ambulance, he would forecast a serious injury and would be saying the Laker season had just gone down the drain. It never seemed to faze

Chick when Jerry would get up in a minute or two and resume playing as if nothing had happened.

During the 1957 season, the worst in USC football history, Hearn was winding up his broadcast from high atop the stadium in Seattle after the Trojans' one and only victory of the season, an exciting win over Washington. USC tackle Ron Mix was on the 40-year line on his hands and knees. Chick informed his radio announcers:

"The Trojans are so excited about winning their first game they are carrying Coach Don Clark off the field. They don't even know that one of their players is lying on the field injured and needs help to get off the

"...Chick's first Laker broadcast—a 1961 playoff game vs. St. Louis—was the beginning of success for the Lakers. They had been averaging only about 5,000 fans. But when they returned for the sixth game of the playoffs, they drew 15,000 and the biggest NBA gate at that time (\$55,000 gross). And in a couple of years he was doing them all."

and needs help to get off the field."

Suddenly, Mix jumped up and ran off the field to join his celebrating teammates. He had found his contact lens.

There has been much fun and many laughs on the road with Chick. On long, tiring road trips he has been one of the people who kept the others loose. You couldn't say that Chick liked to lie. His whoppers were too wild to be called lies. He especially enjoyed each new season. Invariably, there would be one or two new players who had not heard his collection of fantasies about imaginary war escapades and other adventures.

One of the newcomers who could even top some of Chick's stories was guard Dick Barnett. A talented guard, Barnett had an unorthodox, but deadly jumper. He told Chick that when his jump shot was working, he would fire it and call out, "Fall back, Baby."

Every Laker fan soon knew what Chick meant when he would announce, "Fall back, Baby." Sharpshooter Barnett had hit another of his long jumpers.

There was fun, but there were also problems, especially traveling in the East during the winter. One occasion years ago the Lakers were stranded in Cincinnati, scheduled to play in Chicago that night. Planes couldn't leave so

they had to take a train. It was a local and stopped at every little town along the way. The Lakers were going to be late for the game. At one of the stopovers, Chick, getting impatient, saw a farmer out in the snow herding some cattle and yelled to him, "Anybody around here have a bus?"

"What do you want a bus for?" the farmer yelled back.

Chick explained they had a basketball team that had to get to Chicago as quickly as possible.

"Lem Perkins can fit all of you into his hearse," the farmer suggested.

The Lakers continued the journey by slow train. In Chicago at the 63rd street station, people were startled to see the players come out of the train in sneakers and sweat suits in 10 below weather and jump into cabs. It was so cold the cabbies wouldn't even open the trunks for the luggage. The Lakers arrived at the Amphitheatre 1½ hours late and were given 20 minutes to dress. Chick, in his haste to get to the broadcast, caught his new coat on a



cowpen and ripped out a big piece of it. However, his engineer had set up his equipment, the broadcast went on and the Lakers even won the game.

Another time, after a game in Cleveland, the Lakers had to get to Cincinnati. A heater malfunctioned just as the plane was getting ready to takeoff. After an hour's delay the flight was cancelled. Fred Schaus, then coach, found one flight with six vacancies and sent Baylor, West, LaRusso and three other players. The rest of the party got on another plane later and walked into the arena just before the tipoff.

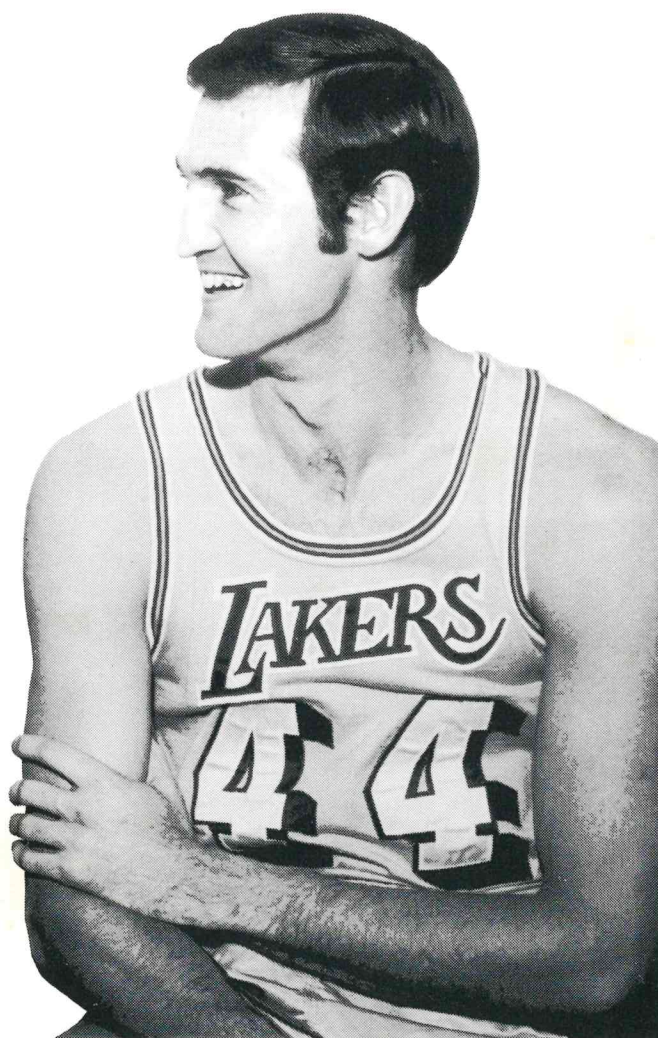
There were also some harrowing experiences. For instance there was the night when the Lakers, unable to land in Cincinnati because of weather conditions, were forced to put down at Toledo, Ohio. It was after midnight by the time they were settled into a hotel. Chick and a couple of others went to a

nearby lunch counter, the only place open, for a late snack. The first two seats at the counter were vacant and so was the fourth. There was a man sitting in the third seat. Chick asked the man if he would move over so the three could sit together and he obliged. Chick sat in the third seat. In a couple of minutes, someone grabbed Chick and said, "Get 'em up."

Chick, thinking it was Elgin Baylor playing another trick, said, "Quit fooling around, I know it's you Elg."

"This is no joke," came the reply. "If you don't put your hands up, I'll blow your head off." Chick turned to look into a gun being held on him by a policeman. Meanwhile, the waitress was frantically waving to the policeman that he had the wrong man. It seems the police had been called and told the man in the third seat had pulled a gun on the waitress. It happened shortly before Chick and friends

Chick and Jerry reminiscing . . .



arrived.

"It's a wonder the nut didn't shoot us all while the policeman was holding the gun on me," Chick said. "Anyhow, I really needed a change of shorts."

During the playoffs in St. Louis one year, Chick was nearly shot when he got too nosy while police were trying to capture a robbery suspect. Every time the Lakers would lose in St. Louis, Coach Fred Schaus would move the team to a different motel. This time they were staying at the Holiday Inn North. There was a long walk from the lobby to the rooms, so Hearn and Schaus agreed to meet under the marquee, then go in for a drink before dinner. As he walked out through a parking area, a car came to a screeching halt near Chick and four policemen, brandishing guns, leaped out of the car and headed towards a nearby field. Maybe Chick thought it was an episode of Dragnet, because he followed the policemen. Suddenly a figure in the field leaped up and began firing. Chick hit the asphalt in a hurry, scratching his hands and messing up a new suit, but surviving. The police blocked off the area and a young man who had just stolen a mail bag was apprehended. Chick, carrying his bag, went straight to the bar. He needed a drink for medicinal purposes.

It is doubtful if either Chick or I will ever forget a game played years ago in the cold old barn known as the Cleveland Arena. The Lakers were there on a freezing night to pay Detroit. West, sick with the flu, was bundled tightly in blankets on the bench, unable to play, but Baylor played magnificently, scoring 47 points and even playing part of the game at guard. With 12 seconds to play the Lakers led

by six points. Moreover, they had the ball. They lost in overtime. By now Baylor, who had played every minute, was so tired he didn't even want to help bring the ball up court. The big men, LeRoy Ellis, Gene Wiley and Rudy LaRusso were throwing the ball in and handling it. Terry Dischinger intercepted an inbounds pass, scored on a layup and only two seconds elapsed. On the next throw-in, Dischinger bowled over a Laker, intercepted the pass again and scored. There were still a couple of seconds left. This time, Dischinger again got control of the ball, but he failed to score. However, referee Ron Rakel called a foul as time expired and Dischinger sank both free throws. The Pistons won in overtime. The next morning during the usual airport wait, Schaus spotted Rakel. It was all we could do to prevent Schaus, who blistered him verbally, from taking a punch at Rakel.

There was also a memorable night in Philadelphia. The Lakers were playing the old Warriors in the Convention Center. The next day Chick had to fly to Pittsburgh to broadcast the USC-Pitt football game. An SC alumnus invited us to dinner at the famous Bookbinders restaurant. The alumnus was a friend of the owner and we sat with him at dinner. It was time to go to the game and Chick asked where he could call a taxi. The owner said, "Never mind, we'll run you over."

We climbed into the longest, sleekest black Packard you ever say, with a chauffeur and all the trimmings. As luck would have it, we pulled up at the arena just as West, Baylor and the other players were arriving by taxis. We said not a word, just walked nonchalantly into the Convention Center.

There were also the frustrations, which began for Chick and the Lakers with the first of many playoff losses to the Boston Celtics in 1962 when Frank Selvy missed a short jump shot that would have given the Lakers the victory in regulation time in the seventh game of the championship series. Most of the frustration ended 10 years later when the Lakers won a record 33 games in a row and won their first NBA championship.

Yes, Chick has been fortunate. He has broadcast the games for a team that had such great players as Baylor, West, Wilt Chamberlain, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar and now the new superstar, Magic Johnson. But then, those fellows have been fortunate, too. They had Chick Hearn telling everyone how good they were.

DAN HAFNER

Players come and go, but Chick Hearn stays forever ...





What the Writers Said

RICH LEVIN

Those who know him well (and this may seem incredible) know that Chick Hearn is at his best away from the microphone.

Chick, the voice of the Lakers, also is their funny man. His quick wit, barbed tongue and keen sense of timing have left a wake of players, coaches, trainers and sports writers literally rolling in the aisle.

He's had so many fine moments that not even Chickie Baby himself can get them all in during a commercial break. One of his finest developed during the last leg of one of those long, mind-boggling, senses-destroying January road trips two years ago. You had to be there to fully appreciate it, but nonetheless it went something like this.

It was a Saturday afternoon. Jerry West was the head coach, Jack McCloskey and Stan Albeck the assistants, Pat Riley Chick's color man.

The Lakers, following stops in New Orleans, Atlanta, Houston, New York, Boston and New Jersey, were giddy from three straight victories and, more importantly, their successful escape from the harsh Eastern winter.

During the six-hour, non-stop flight from Newark to Seattle, they had plenty of time to eat, drink, be merry and ridicule the black and white patterned cardigan sweater Chick wore over a red, white and blue sportshirt.

The sweater was a lull buster. When conversation died away, a one-liner about the sweater that looked like something out of a 1950s time warp inevitably brought it back to life.

Chick, the king of the one-liners, was vulnerable for once in his life and there was nothing he could do about it except say: "I didn't think anybody would notice."

At one time or another, just about everyone in the Lakers' traveling party got his shot in.

On the tram from the terminal to the baggage claim, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar yelled across the car, "Chick, you get that at a black and white sale?"

"That's the worst looking sweater I've ever seen in my life," West tactfully added.

Trainer Jack Curran, who was in his first year with the team and had just hammered out a delicate truce with Chick on the plane, ended it by saying, "I know Marge (Chick's wife) didn't pack that rag for you. She's got too much class."

"All right," screamed Chick, while wagging a menacing

finger at Curran, "the truce is over."

Trainers have always been favorite targets of Chick's tongue over the years. Curran didn't like the role of pigeon so he suggested a non-aggression pact. Chick, as diplomatically as possible, said he would mull it over.

After Curran's remark, the pact required no further mulling. Curran may as well have invaded Poland.

The ragging of Chick continued in the baggage claim. "Chick," said Riley, "I've been meaning to say something about your color coordination."

"I told you Riley," shot back Chick, "no more cute lines."

Just then a uniformed porter pushing a luggage cart passed by. Chick stopped him.

"Hey, buddy," he said, pointing to the cardigan. "You want this sweater?"

The porter looked Chick over from head to toe and grimaced. He shook his head matter-of-factly, said, "Nope," and moved on.

"That does it," Chick screamed.

Now, you must realize, normal people for normal reasons make this long, cross-country flight. By this time, they were all looking at Chick and wondering how this certifiable lunatic and his mad friends had escaped from the institution.

It was right out of "One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest."

"That's it," Chick yelled again. He yanked the cardigan from his shoulders and, holding it between thumb and forefinger like a soiled diaper, neatly deposited it in a nearby trashcan.

"That's the last you'll ever see of this," he yelled.

Everybody in the Laker troupe burst out laughing. It was one of those rollicking, gut-splitting, check-hurting, hyperventilating laughs that makes a season memorable.

And nobody was laughing harder than Chick.

"It wasn't the sweater," screamed somebody over the laughter, "it's the shirt."

Chick, laughing harder than ever, reached for the shirt buttons.

Chick, whose home was burglarized a few weeks earlier, still had a line left. "I couldn't understand," he said, "why the robbers took everything and left the sweater."

The laughter continued. Around Chick it rarely stops.

DAN MURR

Chick Hearn never dreamed it would come down to this.

But they say if you wait long enough, be patient enough, you'll have your day.

Well the Los Angeles Lakers are saying, "Chick Hearn...this is your night!"

March 20 is the end of Hearn's 20 years at the Lakers' microphone. During that time the National Basketball Association team won a pair of world championships.

Hearn sat in the coffee shop of the Continental Plaza Tuesday forenoon, turning the gold championship ring with the big diamond on his finger. It would be his and the Lakers' only trip into Chicago this year.

It has been over 20 years and a billion words from the Skyroom of the Leland Hotel in downtown Aurora. That's where the Lakers' veteran broadcaster began his career in radio with the now defunct WBNU-FM in 1948.

"It was at a very low salary," the 1936 Aurora East High School graduate said. "I had a yen for radio, but no talent."

Hearn laughed. His deep brown eyes sparkled. "And there weren't very many FM sets," he said. "So it was great rehearsals."

And Chick Hearn's night is the culmination of a grueling 10 years from WBNU to Los Angeles by way of Peoria. That's where he did Bradley University basketball for five years.

That isn't to say the Laker years have been easy. "Some people think you just walk into a radio booth, sit down and do it, but we know that isn't the way it is," Chick said.

There are the six hours of cramming before each game day to get facts and figures that are not always at your fingertips. "Everything happens with such rapidity," he said, "that you don't have time to look down." And there's all the travel he must endure.

But enough of the cramming. Chick Hearn's life is one of those you can write a book about.

From the time he organized the old Aurora Foxes, the brief forerunner to the Aurora Sealmasters fastpitch softball team that has since become Home Savings, to the old semipro Aurora Clipper football team for which broadcast. He got into the officiating area where he did both high school and college football and basketball, "And that helped prepare me for what I'm doing now," he said.

To merely scratch the surface of what this former Auroran has done — eight Rose Bowl football games; a half dozen East-West All-Star games; all of the major golf tournaments; the first Muhammad Ali-Joe Frazier fight; both Ali-Ken Norton fights; Hialeah horse racing, NCAA college football and especially Southern Cal football and basketball when he went west from Peoria in 1956. And he worked with NBC-TV and CBS radio at the same time.

He also does a few cameo appearances on television and a few movies. His next movie will be "All the Marbles," starring Peter Falk.

"Boxing is good for my style," says Hearn. "God gave me the ability to talk fast and with clarity."

But this radio business wasn't always like clockwork. One of his biggest flubs came at a Wheaton College football game where he had the runner at the 30, the 40, the 45, the 50 and the 51 yard line.

"There's no 51 yard line," he said and began laughing.

"Or the time with WBNU-FM, a rival of WMRO owned in those days by Martin O'Brien, who was opposed to Hearn's broadcasting a particular sports

event. But Hearn went ahead anyway and in the middle of the second quarter, suddenly found a pair of hands on his shoulders belonging to a pair of big police officers who escorted him out of the building.

"And that was the end of that broadcast," he grinned.

The greatest of Hearn's accomplishments, he believes, is the two different years in which he broadcast all eight games of the opening round of the state basketball tournament in old Huff Gym at Champaign-Urbana in the early 1950s.

They were all played the same day. Later, it was Jack Drees, who was instrumental in his going to the West Coast from Peoria, and Hearn who did the first televised state high school tournament.

It's the old story about the hometown boy who makes good, a success story that Hearn has lived with the help of his wife, Marge, also an Auroran, and his daughter Samantha.

But since joining the Lakers at the end of 1960 season when he was invited to do their playoff games until now, he has had the privilege of watching some of the world's greatest players. Ranked thusly — Elgin Baylor is the best who ever lived; Magic Johnson is the best player alive today.

But from those early low-salaried, low-structured jobs, Chick Hearn believes without a doubt it has been worth it all.

"And I have seen basketball salaries go from the greatest stars making \$30,000 a year to an average salary in the NBA — per player — of \$190,000 a year. Think of that!

"Are they overpaid? Of course they're overpaid," he said. "Any athlete who makes over \$100,000 a year is overpaid...with the exception of the individual ticket sellers. Like the Lakers' Magic Johnson and Kareem (Abdul Jabbar). They can demand and get the big salaries.

"No, I don't resent it. But it's going to get worse. There are those two or three owners who will pay the ridiculous salaries. It's totally out of control. I can see in the years to come a lot of games being played in a hotel ballroom where a brunch is served," he said, "with television paying the bill."

But in 20 years with the Lakers, Chick Hearn has missed two broadcasts. The first in 1962 at St. Louis when he had to return to the West Coast to do a golf tournament. Chicago's Jack Brickhouse filled in for him.

The second time he missed one was in 1965 when he did a college football game at Fayetteville, Ark., and was to fly out in a Lear jet afterward.

"The pilot said that conditions were such they could not take off," Hearn recalled. "But I told him that other small planes were taking off."

But the pilot told Hearn again, "Conditions are that we cannot take off."

And Hearn told him, "If you don't go, I don't go!"

So Chick Hearn, who has since broadcast some 1500 consecutive games, is that marvelous example of a self-made broadcaster, the man with no formal education, but with the desire and drive to succeed. He's the one willing to pay the price. He is the man who knows that the route to success begins at the bottom, not at the top of the heap where many today seem to believe that's where you start.

And he was lucky, in the right place at the right time with the right amount of experience. The voice of the Lakers is also the voice of experience.



BILL LIBBY

Chick Hearn is the best basketball announcer I have ever heard, and I have heard the best of them while living for long periods of time in such hotbeds of basketball as New York and Indiana.

Not everyone will agree with me. You can't please everyone. And Chick does not walk down the middle of the road. He swings from tree to tree. He is individualistic. He is colorful and controversial.

The best of announcers rub some fans wrong when they are heard one hundred or so times a season. All announcers. All sports. Fans and writers argue about the merits of the top pro football announcers they've been hearing only once a week for years.

You have to listen to them if you want to hear the games. Writers write before and after the games. You don't have to read them. You don't know who they are, anyway. Most of you don't bother reading bylines. But announcers are public personalities.

Chick is personality plus. He says more and makes fewer mistakes in one game than most announcers do in three. He has coined phrases like, "no harm, no foul," which have gone into the vocabulary of his sport. He is perceptive and inventive and shoots words into microphones the way soldiers fire bullets from machine guns.

He is one of the few men I've known who never runs out of something to say. He has so much to say his colormen never have to say much. It took him ten years to even accept a colorman. After he did, Hot Rod Hundley called him "Chickie-baby" and he never really got over it.

Call him "Chickie-baby" sometime and see. To tell the truth, he is not the thickest-skinned rhino in the jungle, but he is the most opinionated.

Chick has a background as a player, referee, and coach in basketball. In fact, he plays the parts of player, referee and coach in every basketball game he broadcasts. He has been broadcasting for 35 years, 21 with the Lakers. He really knows the game.

He sees things others do not see. And he sees the story beneath the story. He is that rare announcer who is reporter as well as announcer. He is a journalist who speaks his story. He uses his voice instead of a typewriter.

He has enormous enthusiasm, energy and endurance. He is not longer a kid, but he is as excited as a kid about his game. He looks forward to each game the way a kid looks forward to going to a game. He says, "I look forward to each season the way a kid looks forward to Christmas."

Chick no longer is a kid. He and Marge have been married for more than 35 years and continue to be as close as a couple of lovers, but life has not always been kind to them. The son of a railroad worker in Illinois, he came out of hard times. He and Marge have daughter,

Samantha, but lost a son, Gary to sudden death not too long ago to have been forgotten for a day. "It has not always been easy," sighs Marge. Chick does not talk about it. He hunches up and grows older.

The good old days are gone, when he was younger, when we were younger, when the town and the team and the league were younger. It was more fun then, when life had not yet turned on us, when the trips were tougher, the games wilder, the money harder to come by.

Those who traveled with a team were part of the team. There was a closer camaraderie, more a feeling of adventure.

Chick's gin-rummy games with Elgin were ruthless, cut-throat, full of squint-eyed bluff and tease, loud laughter and louder moans. Elg told the tallest tales, but Chick told some tall ones. Chick used to tell the rookies how he was shot down in the jungle in the South Pacific, but the closest he came to a shot was one with whiskey in it.

If not faster-tongued, he was fleet of foot. He had to be the first off the plane, first out of the airport, first into a taxi, first into the hotel. So Jerry or Rudy would send rookies to fast-break to the carousel to lift his luggage and drive him mad. Players would crash over him coming out of cabs, leaving him to pay for fares neither Lou Mohs nor Fred Schaus would repay without threats of death.

They used to drive rental cars from the hotels to the airports sometimes, and one time the SOB's fixed Chick's car so it would not start and left him behind, standing in the freezing cold of a midwest parking lot, threatening them with death as they drove off.

He laughs about it today, but he laughs less than he did yesterday. He feels less a part of the team today, but he is more *the Lakers* than any member of the team every has been any day. He can broadcast any sport and believes he is best at football, but basketball has become his game and the Lakers his team.

He works as hard at his job as any player or coach does. Unlike many broadcasters, he does not small-talk to game time. He arrives early, goes off by himself, does his homework, and is properly prepared at tip-off. His small-talk comes after games, when he relaxes briefly behind the bar in the press lounge. Then he heads home with his red-head.

He has missed two broadcasts in 20 years and none in ten years, yet he grabs broadcasts on the side as if he needed dough. He needs action. He could retire right now, but he is restless and would die without his work. The red-head understands. So the Irish refugee from steamy gyms rolls on. He is a gentleman and a gentle man, a good, decent man, and the best of friends. And his is a class act.

BEAU RIFFENBURGH

When I was hired to assist Chick Hearn and Keith Erickson at Los Angeles Lakers games, I was somewhat intimidated. Not by the job, but by the personalities. After all, Chick is certainly one of the immortals of the sports broadcasting field—probably the best and the best-known announcer in the NBA if not all of basketball.

For 21 years, Chick has been broadcasting Lakers games—through three owners, seven head coaches, dozens of players, and two World Championships. And no one—player, coach, or owner—has done more to help the Lakers than Chick.

But when I started the job, Chick's reputation preceded him—a reputation as a perfectionist who rapidly became a bear if anything went wrong. Sure, I had heard Chick was first in line for sainthood, but I had also been told he was more similar to an ogre than a saint.

So, when I first met Chick, it was nervous time. Chick was eating dinner in the Forum press lounge before a pre-season game when Scott Carmichael the assistant public relations director for the Kings, introduced me as Beau.

"You got a last name?" Chick barked.

I told him.

"Well, keep it quiet and maybe you can live it down," he said, returning to his dinner.

And now, five months later, after being called off-my-rocker, not so bright, a bizarre fellow, and a guy who always reminds Chick of a joke about dogs, I can honestly say, there is more to Chick Hearn than meets the ear.

For everyone knows Chick is one of the most astute observers of the game. He not only tells facts about the teams, the players, and the coaches, but he observes and relates changes in momentum and style of play, he correctly predicts what is about to happen in games, and he explains not only what happens but why and how.

But Chick has proven to be far more than the consummate play-by-play announcer I knew him to be for the past 13 years when I listened to the Lakers games. He has shown he has a heart of gold to go along with his golden voice, delivery, and style.

Who else, during 30-second breaks for ads, would sign autographs for six different kids? Who else would go behind the counter in the press lounge after every home game to serve others a drink, rather than demand he be given one himself? And who else would consider it an honor for someone to list him as a reference, when all it would mean to most folks is an unwanted interruption in their schedule?

But Chick is certainly not your average guy. He finds time in his busy schedule to help and assist others. And he always leaves them with a little bit of humor to brighten their day as well. And that perhaps is the greatest trademark of Chick Hearn—his humor. For Chick makes wherever he is humorous, interesting, and enjoyable, whether it be a game, a meal, or a conversation in the hall.

And, therefore, Chick's biggest fans are those who actually work with him, such as color-man Keith Erickson, statistician Art Hoffman, engineer Monty Bancroft, and myself. And take it from those of us lucky enough to know him, if Chick is not quite ready for sainthood yet, he certainly deserves the honors he has received, and more. And not for any one thing—Chick Hearn's honors should come because he is an exceptional broadcaster, an exceptional gentleman, and an exceptional man.



STEVE SPRINGER

Who is Chick Hearn?

You would think after two decades with the Los Angeles Lakers, two arenas, three owners, seven coaches and more than 1500 games, the question would be superfluous.

That depends on your perspective.

If you're a Los Angeles fan, Hearn is, above all else, The Voice. You may have heard it for the first time in 1960, back when Jerry Buss owned just one measly apartment building. Kareem Abdul-Jabbar still had some people he could look up to and Jerry West was just a rookie with a crewcut.

That was the Laker's first year in Los Angeles and Hearn was right there from the start. He introduced the local populace to the subtleties of the pro game through his own, unique "word's eye view," complete with one ubiquitous popcorn machine and a whole lot of hot dogs, with and without mustard.

There were stars: Zeke from Cabin Creek, Elgin, Wilt the Stilt, Kareem, Silk and Magic. Each has had the talent and consistency to rise to great heights. But it didn't hurt any of them to have Hearn courtside, the greatest p.r. agent in the game.

Not that Hearn is a "homer" among broadcasters. To those who have played for Los Angeles over the years, he is more like The Father.

In recent years, he has combined his on-the-air duties with the position of assistant general manager.

In that role, he has been like a concerned parent, chastizing his "kids" when they fail to perform properly, praising them when they do like a stage mother.

His ability to take an active role in the fortunes of the club, yet avoid the "us" versus "them" label affixed to many broadcasters is further testament to his vocal skills.

There is another voice to Chick Hearn, however, a voice heard loud and clear by all who have ventured out on the road with the Lakers. To a journeying sportswriter, Hearn will always be The Travel Agent.

Hearn is a fastidious traveler, as might be expected of a man who logs as many miles a year as he does. He expects the same of those in his party.

And those who come in contact with his party.

Take the case of the lady who ill-advisedly drove her car up to the Laker team bus in Seattle last year and blocked its exit from the airport.

With the bus unable to budge, the lady, wearing a rather garish hat, began unloading the trunk of her car in a leisurely manner.

Finally, Hearn could take it no more. He pulled open a window and yelled out, "Keep wearing that hat lady. It'll come back into style."

Flustered, she moved into high gear. He had faked her right into the popcorn machine.



PAUL McLEAN

Twenty-one years is a long time to be doing anything, even more so when you're expected to stay interested.

But Chick Hearn, who has done the play-by-play for the Lakers that long, still announced each and every game much like it was his first.

The game could be over by halftime, one of the many clunkers produced in an 82-game, NBA schedule. The players may just be going through the motions. The fans at the arenas may be fiddling with their car keys and heading for the exits while there's still most of a quarter left to be played.

Chick doesn't have that option. He has to stick around and find something about the game that is still interesting.

And he always seems to find something. So-and-so is playing in his umpteenth consecutive game. Or has a chance to score the however-many-eth point of his career. Or has a chance to set a personal season high in consecutive free throws made.

Collectively, it may all be worth a yawn, but not to Chick.

And sometimes the higher gear may move a bit too fast.

Last May, as the Lakers were taking the court in Philadelphia for the sixth game of the NBA championship series — the game that featured the absence of Kareem Abdul-Jabbar and (chuckle, chuckle) Magic Johnson playing center — the excitement was getting to Chick even before he went on the air.

But he didn't hit its peak until the broadcast began, Chick welcoming his radio listeners by saying: "This is Keith Erickson along with Chick Hearn." For once, Chick wound up in his own popcorn machine.

The slip, though, was followed by a memorable game and, as clear-headedness prevailed, Chick recovered to give one of his more memorable broadcasts. After 21 years, recovering is no problem. After all, he knows the game of basketball as well as he knows his own name. Or even Keith Erickson's.

DOUG IVES

There is a lot to like about Chick Hearn, but in my 16-year association with him, I have most admired his professionalism.

Everyone knows he ranks with the best play-by-play announcers in any sport, but what many don't know is that simply calling the action is only half the job. Where does all that storehouse of information come from?

It comes from doing his "homework" game in and game out. He is the first member of the Laker organization at all the games, home and away. He pores over game notes; he reads newspaper reports; he talks with players and referees; and he maintains his objectivity.

In an age when some announcers are shills, Chick is exactly the opposite. He loves the Lakers, to be sure, but he can chastise them, too, and poke fun when it is needed. He enjoys spreading rumors, but most of them are based on strong evidence. When he makes a prediction, he is usually correct.

For a number of years I served as the "keeper of the statistics" for Chick, sitting two seats to his right in his nest at the Forum. For a time I wrote out my statistical facts and figures, but after awhile, I would just hold up my fingers and he would get the message.

For example, if so-and-so was on a hot shooting streak, I would flash a figure with one hand, for baskets made, and another figure with the other, for attempts. Instantly, he knew the player was 5 for 8, or 10 out of 15. He understood the sign language with a simple glance, never losing his concentration to what was happening on the court.

Chick's enthusiasm never ceases to amaze me. After two decades, you would think he would be bored by less important games. But he is bubbly every night, making the game better than it is on many occasions. It's evident his love for the sport and his appreciation of the players' abilities knows no bounds.

You won't find one in 10 players who like the road, but with Chick around, it's tolerable. Nothing is mundane. He will make up outlandish stories if humor is called for, and the bus rides to and from games often come alive because he "holds court."

Chick rarely goes home immediately after games. At the Forum, you can often find him in the press room lounge telling stories to whoever will listen. He may recap the night's action, pass along the latest rumor, or tell you about the "good old days." He always has an audience.

It's fun to look back on the early years of the Lakers, and Hearn often relates what happened as if it were yesterday. Rod Hundley stories are legend. Ditto for Lou Mohs and Fred Schaus. You could fill a book with the strange things Butch Van Breda Kolff did. And the late Jim Krebs, too.

Chick relates to players of all generations. I've never known a player to hold a grudge against Chick. They may have been peeved briefly when he told it like it was, but it's impossible to stay mad at him.

Space doesn't permit me to recount some of the humorous incidents involving Chick, but I really wouldn't want to at this time. He would enjoy them, but tonight is the night we salute him for his talent, for his endurance, for his enthusiasm, and for his professionalism.

When I think of Chick, I think of that advertisement about getting all the gusto you can out of life. Chick is a man of gusto. Fortunately for Laker fans, he has shared those moments with you—and will continue to for many years to come.



1972 • WORLD CHAMPIONS • 1980

March 12, 1981

Mr. Chick Hearn
Los Angeles Lakers
P. O. Box 10
Inglewood, California 90306

Dear Chick:

Congratulations on your SPECIAL NIGHT of appreciation from all of us Chick Hearn fans. Your consistent dedication and high standards of reporting have made this night long overdue.

I personally feel there is no-one in sports broadcasting that can approach your wit and quality of reporting a basketball game. Your skill and technique over the past 20 years have been synonymous with the Lakers success. With this in mind, I join in with all your friends to wish you another happy, healthy and successful 20 or more years here in Los Angeles.

With personal and sincere regards

Bill Sharman

Bill Sharman
General Manager

"...to me you are Chicklet—our famous Lakers announcer, my colleague, my friend. This is indeed Chick's Night in Chick's House with Chick's friends."

Claire Rothman, The Forum

"...Congratulations on "This Is Your Night" tribute. This honor is a long time coming! I'm sorry I won't be officiating the game that evening, but my schedule has me elsewhere. I am proud to think of you not only as the finest play-by-play announcer in the NBA, but as a personal friend."

Earl Strom, NBA Official



NATIONAL BASKETBALL ASSOCIATION

OLYMPIC TOWER • 645 FIFTH AVENUE • NEW YORK, N. Y. 10022 • 212-826-7000

February 4, 1981

Mr. Chick Hearn
Los Angeles Lakers
P.O. Box 10
Inglewood, CA 90306

Dear Chick:

I honestly believe you have been a big part of NBA basketball growth and development. Your objective and honest reporting has made many friends throughout the country.

I, for one, feel privileged to have been associated with you over these many years.

Congratulations on your "This is Your Night." You deserve it.

Sincerely,

Norm

Norman F. Drucker
Supervisor of Officials

NFD/ms

"...From the top of the key to the popcorn machine to the dribble-drive, you were the best that was. You want baseball, you go to Scully. Football, you to to Husing. But Basketball is Chick Hearn."

Jim Murray, LA Times

"...You've been such a credit to our sportscasting profession that I am delighted to have this opportunity to congratulate you on your night....Chick Hearn is the best basketball announcer I have ever heard."

Ross Porter, Los Angeles Dodgers

PURDUE UNIVERSITY DIVISION OF INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETICS

February 26, 1981

Mr. Chick Hearn
Los Angeles Lakers
P.O. Box 10
Inglewood, CA 90306

Dear Chick:

First, Chick, may I say how pleased I am that your friends with the Los Angeles Lakers have honored you with this special tribute which you so richly deserve. I know of no one that has meant more to the Los Angeles Lakers franchise than "Chicky-Baby" dating back to the time that we got the whole thing started together in 1960.

Chick, I fondly recall the many hours that we spent together on road trips and how much I have genuinely appreciated those moments and our friendship developed from these many hours spent together. I honestly do not know what I would have done without you during those early years when we were not winning too often on the road.

I also reflect upon all of the beautiful wins and good things that happened to us both and to the Los Angeles Lakers during the 12 years that we spent together.

My very best to you, Chick, for continued good fortunes as the announcer of the Lakers and for your good health for many enjoyable years ahead.

Barbara and I send our very best to you and to Marge on this your special day.

Your old buddy as ever.

Sincerely,

Fred Schaus

Fred Schaus
Associate Athletic Director

"...Congratulations to you, Chick, for your extraordinary contribution to basketball. The great ones are very few and in my opinion you fit in that category..."

Red Auerbach, Boston Celtics

"...To me the Lakers are the team and you are my announcer. You are both the best. It's about time they gave you a night."

Karl Malden

SOUTHWESTERN ORTHOPAEDIC MEDICAL GROUP, INC.

801 EAST HADLEY STREET, SUITE 200
INGLEWOOD, CALIFORNIA 90301
TELEPHONE (313) 874-9200 PRACTICE LIMITED TO ORTHOPAEDIC SURGERY
ORTHOPAEDIC SPORTS MEDICINE AND SURGERY

ROBERT K. KERLAN, M.D.
FRANK W. JOBE, M.D.
VINCENT S. CARTER, M.D.
CLARENCE L. SHIELDS, JR., M.D.
STEPHEN J. LOMBARDO, M.D.
H. ROYER COLLINS, M.D.
LEWIS A. YOCUM, M.D.

March 20, 1981

Mr. Chick Hearn
Los Angeles Lakers
The Forum
Inglewood, California

Dear Chick:

If any single individual is immediately identifiable with the Los Angeles Lakers, it certainly would have to be you Chick. It is absolutely impossible to think of listening to the Lakers and not hearing your voice describing the action with all your "chickisms" and "hearnisms".

I think of you, as I am sure you think of yourself when you get totally wrapped up in announcing the Lakers and living the Lakers, as owner on some occasions, general manager on another, coach on another, player at times, and referee on occasions. Oftentimes I see you as the doctor in charge of what is going on, and I love every role you play.

I think that no one else could play it to the hilt as you do and can only echo what everyone says, and that is, I can't imagine the Lakers being the Lakers without Chick Hearn!

From someone who has appreciated all the important information you have offered in helping me do my job in the years I have been with the Lakers, I want to extend my heartfelt wishes for as many more broadcasts and as much more involvement with the Lakers as you could possibly want in the future.

Best wishes from Rachel, all our children and grandchildren who have also become great Laker fans.

Affectionately,

Bob
Robert K. Kerlan, M.D.

From the desk of
JOHN WOODEN

3-20-81

Dear Chick,
Congratulations on "His Is Your Night" and for the craftsmanship and professionalism you have brought to the field of sports announcing and especially to the game of basketball. You truly "paid your dues" through hard work, enthusiasm, and persistence and richly deserve the enviable position you have attained. At the risk of appearing somewhat prejudiced, it pleases me to see a fellow mid-westerner achieve a plateau of excellence to which all others strive. Best wishes to you and yours always.

Sincerely,
John Wooden

LOS ANGELES



1000 ELYSIAN PARK AVENUE
LOS ANGELES CALIF 90012

March 10, 1981

Mr. Chick Hearn
Sportscaster
The Forum
P. O. Box 10
Inglewood, CA 90306

Dear Chick:

I am delighted to have the opportunity to join the fans who salute you tonight. Your accurate entertaining and colorful description of Laker Basketball games is as much a part of the community as Dodger Stadium.

Those of us who have spent a lifetime trying to do play-by-play know full well how difficult the job can be and salute you for your consistent excellent performance.

You are truly "ONE OF THE BEST".

Warmest wishes,

Vin
Vin Scully

VS:ss

"...Your sincere and exciting account of all the Lakers games throughout the years was greatly responsible for my becoming a Lakers fan. You will have your place in the history of sports broadcasting as one of the very best which you surely deserve..."

Rhonda Fleming Mann

"...Congratulations on being one of the NBA's tried and ture. Your outstanding reputation over the years may not be matched. Hope we can be in a position to see you in a rematch this spring."

Billy Cunningham, Philadelphia 76ers

Dear Chick,

Congratulations on 'Your Night'. Many NBA announcers have come & gone over the years, but you are certainly 'One-of-the-best'. The Los Angeles Lakers have been very fortunate to have had you at the microphone all these years to help make their games exciting whether it be the World Championship years of 1972 & 1980 or the other years of battling for the playoffs.

A Laker broadcast without you, Chick, would be like a hot dog without mustard.

I have always considered you to be more than just another announcer or the Voice of the Lakers but rather The Voice of the NBA.

A true professional in every sense of the word, it is fitting that you have spent your career associating with Stars & Superstars, because you are truly a Superstar in your own right year after year.

Best Wishes & Much Happiness
For many years to come,

Sharon Fife



1972 • WORLD CHAMPIONS • 1980

March 12, 1981

Mr. Chick Hearn
Los Angeles Lakers
P. O. Box 10
Inglewood, California 90306

Dear Chick:

I would like to extend my congratulations to you on this SPECIAL NIGHT.

From a personal view, I have never known anyone who could officiate, coach, devise travel plans and also find time to broadcast a game as well as you do.

Basketball, on the professional level, would NEVER have achieved its popularity in Los Angeles without you! You made the Lakers, NOT the players.

I consider it a pleasure to have been associated with you during my many years with the Lakers.

My very best to you as you continue your "Words-Eye-View".

Very sincerely

Jerry West
Jerry West

JW/ml1

NATIONAL BASKETBALL ASSOCIATION



HEMISFAIR ARENA
P. O. BOX 530
SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS 78292
ADMIN: 512/224-4611
TICKET: 512/224-9578

March 10, 1981

Mr. Chick Hearn
Los Angeles Lakers
P. O. Box 10
Inglewood, California 90306

Dear Chick:

It is with great pleasure and pride that the Albeck family write you and congratulate you on your accomplishments as the Lakers announcer. Your career has been dotted with nothing but success.

I told Phyllis and our children you are like an artist. You commissioned and popularized professional basketball in Southern California. You have painted every game with colorful, vivid language bringing your vast audience an eye-witness view as only you can do. You have agonized with the adversity and reveled with the Lakers because of your deep love for the team. Our hope is that basketball gives back to you what you have given the game.

Thanks for all the sincere remarks, kindness to our family and most of all, your highly valued friendship - you crazy son-of-a-bitch - we love you!!

Cordially

Stan

Stan Albeck and family

SA/ml1

"...I'm sorry that I'm not at the Forum to personally applaud what you have meant to basketball and its reportage. It takes three of us to do what you manage so well by yourself. Personally, I wish I could deliver as much information *during total* plays as you do *between* dribbles...."

Dick Enberg, NBC Sports

"I have been around the Lakers from their arrival in Los Angeles, and I think *you* more than anyone, are the Lakers. I really feel your voice, personality, and description of a Lakers game symbolize the Lakers more than anyone or anything else."

Bill Libby

"...Congratulations on being recognized as the most innovative, creative and precise announcer in all the years of basketball broadcasting. You have sometimes been kidded. But, remember, that's always reserved for the true giants of their field..."

Jim Healy, KLAC

"...For as long as I can remember, you have set the standard for every other NBA broadcaster to try and measure up to. The contribution you have made, not only to the Lakers and the NBA, but to the profession of sports broadcasting has been phenomenal. You have been, are now, and will continue to be the leader in innovative basketball broadcasting. Thanks for letting the rest of us follow in your footsteps..."

Al McKoy, Voice of the Phoenix Suns

WASHINGTON REDSKINS

PRO FOOTBALL INC.

JACK KENT COOKE
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

February 27 1981

Mr Chick Hearn
Los Angeles Lakers
P O Box 10
Inglewood CA 90306

Dear Chick

Twenty years is a long time to do anything; but to do it as well as you do is nothing short of a miracle.

In my many years of professional sport, I have not heard a play-by-play announcer even remotely matching your capabilities. You are truly a nonpareil in the field of sports broadcasting. Not, mind you, "one-of-the-best". Simply, the best.

Your demeanor and deportment "off-mike" matches your abilities "on-mike". Character is the essence of the man known as Chick Hearn. The character is exemplified in his choice of a wife.

I consider it a great honor to have known you, admired you and to say quietly "He is my friend, and I am his".

Warmest personal regards to you and dear Marge.

As ever

Jack

**FIGHT
BACK!
WITH DAVID
HOROWITZ**

February 11, 1981

Mr. Chick Hearn
Los Angeles Lakers
P. O. Box 10
Inglewood, CA 90306

Dear Chick:

You are one of the greatest sports announcers and personalities ever!

As you know, I have been a fan of yours ever since you did the Bradley basketball games in Peoria, and I worked with you on several occasions as a spotter.

You not only bring excitement and insight to what you do, but your expertise and knowledge of sports are profound.

Congratulations!

You are indeed "One-of-the-Best!"

Cheerfully,

David Horowitz
David Horowitz

THE NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE

410 PARK AVENUE



NEW YORK, N.Y. 10022 • PLaza R:1500

20 March 1981

Mr. Chick Hearn
Los Angeles Lakers
P. O. Box 10
Inglewood, California
90306

Dear Chick:

You've come a long way since the "Squeaky" Melchiorre days when no one won in Peoria except Bradley--and Chick Hearn.

I've always felt that dedicated and talented sportscasters have played a major role in the growth and success of sports. Your career certainly tends to support this view, conceding that the likes of Kareem and "Magic" helped a little in the more recent years.

Carrie joins me in sending best personal wishes and congratulations to you and also the Laker management for having the good judgment to honor you.

Regards,

Pete Rozelle
PETE ROZELLE
Commissioner

PR:te

WFO 91523 (213) 840-4444

**W GROUP W
PRODUCTIONS**

"I want to congratulate you for the many years of quality broadcasting you have given the Lakers. You handled our memorable 1980 season with the enthusiasm and expertise of a World Champion!"

Paul Westhead

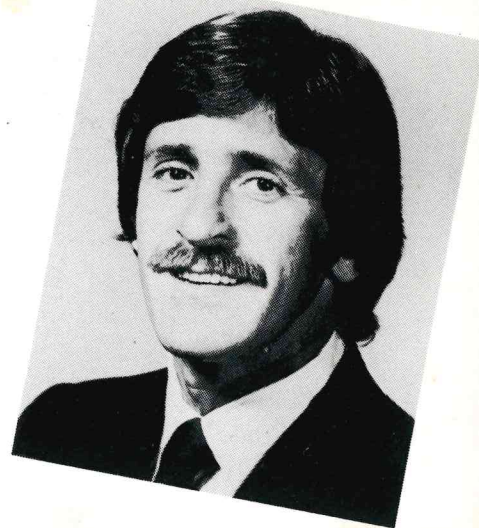
"... You have been one of the top people in your field since your start. You have always been my personal favorite as a broadcaster and as a person. Besides your great ability, you have always been more than fair and honorable with visiting teams..."

Red Holzman, New York Knicks



1972 • WORLD CHAMPIONS • 1980

TIME-OUT CHICK!



Dear Chick,

The first time I ever listened to a Lakers game was in 1967 while I was playing for the San Diego Rockets. At first, I said to myself, "Come On!" "Who is this guy—"the mustard's off the hot dog", "faked him into the popcorn machine", "hung out to dry"! And, that colorman he was using, Hot Rod saying, "That's right, Chickie Baby". At first, I thought this was a spin-off of "Looney Tunes", until I started to hear things about the game that I didn't even know. That man, Chick Hearn, was quick, witty, precise and very professional.

I became further impressed when Chick interviewed me before a Lakers game and began telling me about my life story from being raised in Schenectady, New York, my days at Kentucky under the Baron, Adolph Rupp and yes, he did have some stories about Adolph, even ones that I had not heard, and I thought I had heard them all. The more that I listened to Chick on the radio and the more I began to watch him on T.V., the more I began to admire the man, "That's Right, Chick".

One of the lowest times of my life was in 1970 after being shuttled off to Portland for a no-way ticket and boarding pass and ran into Chick outside the Coliseum after an exhibition game with the Lakers. Not knowing the Lakers were trying to acquire me and dead sure the Blazers were going to cut me, I must have had this quiet look of desperation on my face. Standing like an idiot in the rain, Chick saw me and said, "You Kentucky guys still don't know when to come in out of the rain", "What you need is some good California sunshine, hang in there". He had this twinkle in his eye, you know, the twinkle Chick gets when he is ready to pull a fast one, (couldn't be a slow one), on his colorman.

Within 48 hours, I was a Laker and eleven years later, I still am. These past eleven years have been great and one of the main reasons is because of Chick and Marge Hearn. As a player, I always looked to Chick when things were going bad for me. He always had the right thing to say: encouragement, support, and honest constructive criticism. I really valued that! Yes, he was more than just "The Voice Of The Lakers." At times when the club would be reeling from a loss, the next day he would be chirping away, making light of our execution as a team, individual mistakes, anything to loosen us up. The bus rides would start off quiet and glum and by the time we got to the airport, we usually would be acting like Don Rickles wearing a yarmulke on a nude beach. Yes, losing was just as much a part of the N.B.A. as winning. He made us and me, in particular, aware of that. I'll never forget my playing days with the Lakers, mostly because of the man who made us laugh at ourselves, at him and with him. "That's Right, Chick".

So, for the man who definitely has the fastest mouth in the West, along with the biggest heart, who can do a New York Times crossword puzzle, (Not Los Angeles Times, he says they are too easy), in 15 minutes, for a man who hired me to do color because he liked the way I described Kareem's sky hood during an audition as "hopefully graceful," Chick said, "I liked the word, 'graceful', but you have to work on 'hopefully'."

For a man who has lived and died with the Lakers through thick and thin; the losing and the Championships; who scolded his team like they were his children, as only a father could, So what for a little second guessing, "I think it's time for a time out", "That's Right, Chick". "Do you think the coaches know how many time outs they have left." For a man who encouraged me to take up coaching because, "It's either that or a voice transplant". I did become a coach.

So, for a man who has never been popped, buttered or hung out to dry, TIME OUT, Chick, you deserve it! "That's right, Chick"—You're the best.

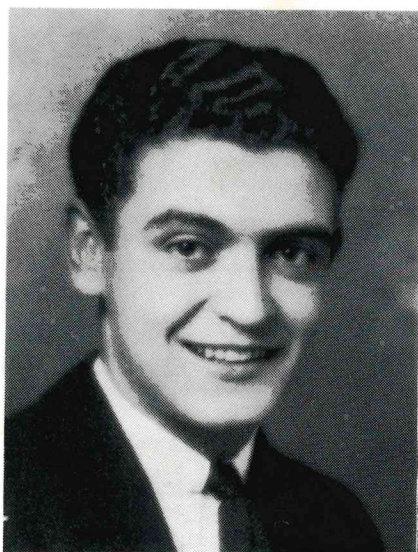


*Yacht Friend
4 LIVES*

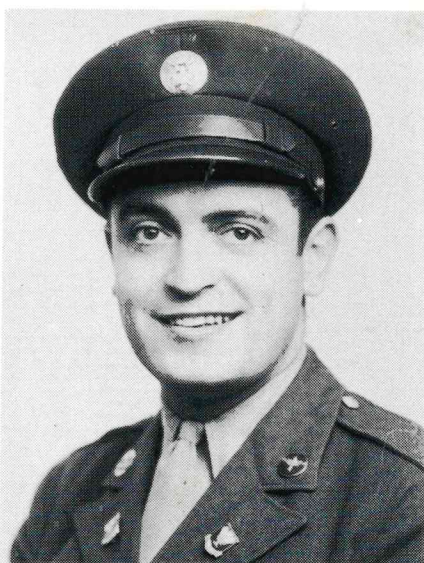
In the Beginning . . .



"Chickie-Baby"
at six months!



High School
graduation . . .



1942
First Sgt. Chick Hearn.
While in service he
organized a touring
baseball team for the
military.

Chick Hearn was born Francis Dale Hearn in Aurora, Illinois of Irish parentage, the son of a railroad worker.

His nickname was born when he was playing AAU basketball. During one AAU season he was having a great year and Chick had a special pair of tennis shoes he continued to wear. Even though the shoes were falling apart, Chick refused to wear anything else. Finally, a lady asked him if she were to buy him another pair of sneakers, would he wear them. Chick said — yes —, and so the next day in front of his locker was a beautifully wrapped box. His AAU teammates gathered around and when he opened the box inside, instead of a pair of tennis shoes, there was a dead chicken. That day in practice, his nickname became "Chicken" and a few days later it was shortened to Chick.

An outstanding high school athlete, Chick was the captain of his high school basketball team, East Aurora, and later played AAU ball while officiating college and prep games. His first job out of Aurora College, though, was a credit analyst for Dunn & Bradstreet.

He had had a taste of public address speaking and liked it and it was while working with Dunn & Bradstreet he began radio broadcasting for \$5 a day.

It was a small station in Aurora and Chick did a variety of interviews: beauty contests, game show host (The Sky's The Limit), short sports show, religious thoughts, and the like. When a regular sports announcer became ill, Chick was sent to Champaign, Illinois to do the "Sweet Sixteen"—the Illinois High School Basketball Tournament. He was so thrilled about getting the opportunity, that he broadcasted all eight games in the elimination round, virtually nonstop!

And that was the beginnings of an extraordinary career by an extraordinary man. It was also the time he began working crossword puzzles to help improve his vocabulary. And several years later, he still does at least one crossword puzzle a day.

'CHICK' HEARN WILL BE HEARD AROUND WORLD

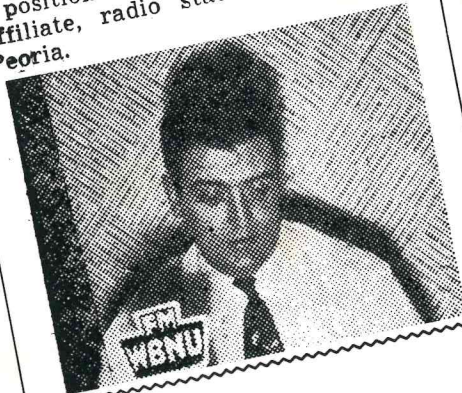
Francis D. "Chick" Hearn, former program director of station WBNU, FM, and now sports caster at WEEK at Peoria, has been selected by the armed forces to send play by play stories of all Bradley university basketball games around the world to the G.I.'s overseas.

Station WEEK is the only outlet for the National Broadcasting company between Chicago and St. Louis and Hearn will broadcast all of the home games of Bradley university over this station, many of them thru a nation-wide hookup of the NBC.

Hearn is now doing a twice daily sport cast Monday thru Friday at 5:45 p. m. and 10:15 p. m., and also a three time a week broadcast at 6:15 p. m., with Fordy Anderson,

'CHICK' HEARN JOINS STAFF OF NATIONAL CHAIN

Francis Dale "Chick" Hearn, veteran and popular radio sports announcer and program director of Aurora radio station WBNU, which suspended operations Thursday night, has accepted the offer of a position on the staff of the NBC affiliate, radio station WEEK, at Peoria.



The Phoenix Club was a touring service team. That's Chick just to the right of the trophy.

Aurora, Illinois . . .

From Aurora:



1936 CENTRAL—A.A.U.—CHAMPS
WESTERN—AUSTIN—AURORA

Front Row—Sellers Pyle, Ray Gasper, Ray Bergeson, Fran Hearn, Jack Koblenze, Hebert Johnson, Coach. *Back Row*—Manager, Joe Levens, Albie Reinert, Art Fitzenz, Joe Peiffer, Fran Beach, Forrest Mann, Fred Fischer, Timekeeper.

Illinois Bell Will Sponsor 'Sweet Sixteen' Telecast

Final Four Games To Be Televised On Ten Stations

You can have the best "seat" in the house for the final four games of the Illinois High School Association basketball tournament, March 19.

For the fourth consecutive year Illinois Bell will sponsor the telecast of the semi-finals on Saturday afternoon and finals that evening of the "Sweet Sixteen" tournament from Champaign-Urbana.

Ten Illinois television stations, covering almost all of the territory served by Illinois Bell, will be linked together in a special network for the tournament telecast. The television audience, numbering into the millions, will be the largest in the history of high school athletics.

Behind the microphone to describe the games and the excitement will be Jack Drees of Chicago and "Chick" Hearn of Peoria, popular Illinois sportscasters.

Platform from which the battery of television cameras will "see" the games is in the center of the east sideline of the gym. Elevated about ten feet above the playing floor, the cameras will be able to bring you all of the floor play and pick up fascinating bits of tournament flavor on the sidelines.

Telecasting of the semi-finals will begin at 1 p.m., and championship and third place play at 7:30 p.m. See your newspaper for local channel listings.

TELEBRIEFS

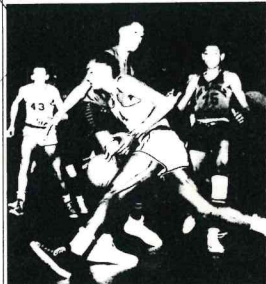
MARCH, 1955

☆☆☆

VOL. XVII. No. 3



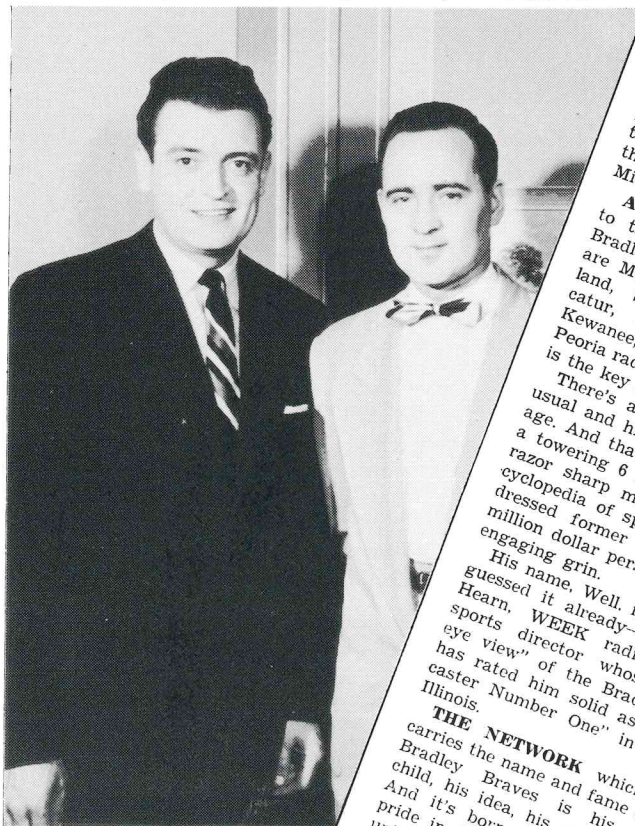
Special network for "Sweet Sixteen" telecast.



Basketball action, like this at the 1954 "Sweet Sixteen" tournament, will be brought to millions of viewers in Illinois Bell territory.



Chick and Gordy Anderson, Bradley University basketball Coach



Chick Hearn Brings First BU Basketball Network To Alums In Three States

A history-making "First" in the annals of Bradley basketball is spreading the name and fame of Bradley University through the Midwest.

For the first time in the history of Bradley basketball play by play of the games is carried to three states—it may be four by the time you read this — and more than 11 cities throughout the Midwest!

AMONG THE CITIES listening to the play by play of every Bradley game at home or away are Moline, Davenport, Rock Island, Springfield, Quincy, Decatur, Rockford, Bloomington, Kewanee, Effingham and others. Peoria radio station WEEK 1350, is the key station in the setup. There's a reason for this unusual and history making coverage. And that is the devotion of a towering 6 foot 3 guy with a razor sharp mind that's an encyclopedia of sports—a snappily dressed former athlete with a million dollar personality and an engaging grin.

His name, Well, if you haven't guessed it already—it's "Chick" Hearn. WEEK radio and TV sports director whose "word's eye view" of the Bradley game has rated him solid as "Sports-caster Number One" in Central Illinois.

THE NETWORK which now carries the name and fame of the Bradley Braves is his brain child, his idea, his great dream. And it's born of a deep-seated pride in Bradley sports and the university itself as a great asset.

(Continued on Page 3)

In the late 40's, Chick left Aurora and he and Marge and his two children moved to Peoria, Illinois where for six years he would broadcast Bradley University basketball games.

The station in Peoria, WEEK, was an NBC affiliate, and in addition to covering the sporting events of Bradley University, Chick had several daily sports broadcasts.

When television finally arrived, he opened the first sports segment for WBNU (NBC) and did two shows nightly, plus several television commercials.

Chick quickly gained wide popularity with

his graphic descriptions of Bradley University basketball, football and University of Illinois football games. Together with Jack Drees, Hearn annually handled the televising of Illinois State High School basketball tournaments and as a free-lancer, he did NBC Football Games of the Week, coast-to-coast Pabst Blue Ribbon Fights and national network telecasts of stock car races.

Perhaps his top achievement, while at Bradley, was the organization of the Bradley University Basketball Network, which broadcasted all Bradley games to major cities around the State of Illinois.

to Peoria . . .

From Peoria:



Moving West in the Mid-Fifties . . .



The "Voice of Troy" with Trojan football coach John McKay. Chick did USC football and basketball for six years.

And when Chick Hearn arrived in California, his career continued to blossom. He came West and accepted a post with the Columbia Broadcasting System's Pacific Coast network in Hollywood.

His first assignment was to do play-by-play broadcasts for CBS of all University of Southern California collegiate sports events originating through KNX, the basic CBS station on the West Coast.

He also did a daily TV and Radio Sports

Show in Los Angeles. His broadcasts of USC football and basketball games went out over 47 stations in the 11 Western states.

Chick started his radio show on CBS, nightly, and was discovered by NBC and they asked him to do a nightly TV show. So he would do his radio bit on CBS, and then run a block to the NBC studios to do his television show.

When NBC moved to Burbank, he quit doing the nightly radio show on CBS, although they still carried the Southern California games. Chick was the Sports Director for KNBC for ten years, doing both a six and 11 p.m. sportscast. He was the "Voice of Troy" for six seasons.

When the Lakers moved West in 1960, they did not broadcast any of their games. They made the playoffs that season and then owner Mr. Robert Short asked Chick to announce the playoff games.

He did and mail literally came in bushels, so Short hired Chick for the next year...plus the Southern California football games, plus the NBC nightly sports show, plus some national sporting assignments, which were beginning to come in.

A typical night would be for Chick to do his nightly 6:00 p.m. sports show at NBC, drive to the game and broadcast the Lakers. NBC would have a helicopter waiting to take him back to Burbank for the 11:00 p.m. show, while his wife Marge would drive the car back and meet him in Burbank.

After a football game, many times he would be taken by motorcycle from the Coliseum, to a helicopter pad, to make a plane to fly to a Lakers game. On many occasions he did two games in a day in different parts of the country.

After Jack Kent Cooke bought the Lakers, he eventually asked Chick for exclusive rights to his time, although still allowing him to do some national shows if they did not interfere with the Lakers. At times Cooke hired small jets to get Chick back in time for a Lakers broadcast.

Chick's string of accomplishments is breathtaking....Twice named "National Sportscaster of the Year" by his peers....Golden Mike Award...Illinois Hall of Fame...he won an Emmy Award for his Nightly Sports Show in 1965...and others.

He has broadcasted virtually every kind of sporting event there is, including: NCAA Football, USC Football and Basketball, Los Angeles Open Golf Tournament, stock car races, pro wrestling, the Los Angeles Aztecs soccer club, Nevada Las Vegas basketball games, the first Ali-Frazier fight, horse racing from Hialeah, the Tournament of Champions (Golf) for seven years, twice the Rose Bowl parade, many East-West Shrine Football Games, the Junior Rose Bowl, Jackpot Bowling (with Milton Berle), Let's Play Golf (with Dean Martin and Joe Kirkwood), the World Series of Golf, the Bing Crosby Tournament at Pebble Beach, All-Star Celebrity Tennis, Bowling for Dollars...and of course, his love affair with the Los Angeles Lakers.

His love affairs with the Lakers began with the playoffs that first season the club moved West (1960) and tonight Chick is broadcasting his 1,819th Laker game—the last 1,427 consecutively.

He has missed two—and he remembers them both vividly.

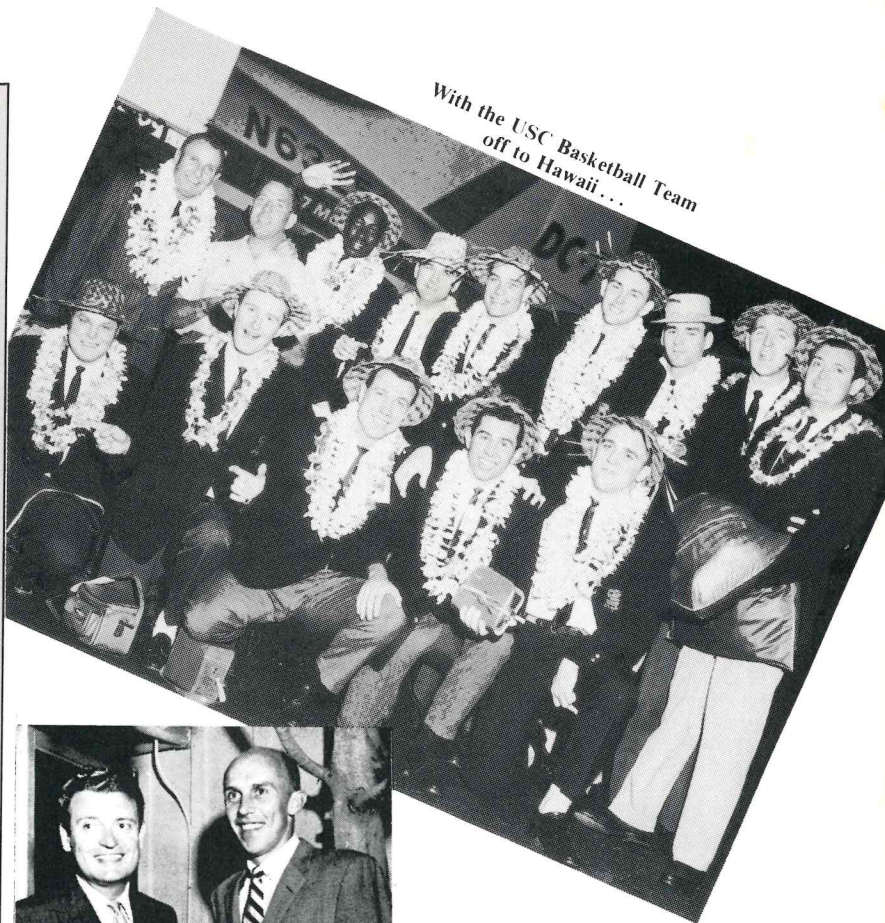
"One game I was supposed to do in St. Louis, but I had a commitment to cover a major golf tournament in California for NBC, so the Lakers got Jack Brickhouse to sit in for me," Hearn recalled.

"The other time I was covering an NCAA football game in Arkansas, and I had a charter flight all set up to go following the game. When I got the airport it was closed, so I missed the Lakers game that night."

In the 20 years Chick has been at courtside calling the action for the Lakers, he has developed a vocabulary second to none. Several of the phrases he originated—"no harm, no foul"... "unanswered points" ... "air ball" ... "yo-yoing" "dribble drive"—are now a part of every basketball broadcaster's lexicon.

And in 20 years, a few of the games Chick has broadcasted stand out in his mind as memorable. The next few pages of this tribute to Chick Hearn recall some of those games.

And when asked recently about his career, Chick had these comments, "I think I've touched about every base that I can imagine. It has been a marvelous life, and I'm not ready to get out of the business yet. My career in radio and TV has been, quote, fun, unquote."



With the USC Basketball Team off to Hawaii...



NBC Sportscaster Chick Hearn (left) gathers background material from great professional basketball star George Yardley to use on fall telecasts.



Who said Chick always kept his eye on the court (with Red Sanders and Jayne Mansfield)

to Los Angeles ...



JOHN HALL

Instant Hysteria

Well, the Lakers are down to the magic number, sudden death, their last chance and things like that tonight as they return to the Forum for another evening with Bill Russell.

In other words, it's rather down 3-2 in their world championship runoff with the Celtics, they must win tonight to earn the pleasure of going back once again to Boston Sunday for the seventh, final and deciding game.

Whether that would or will be a pleasure is another story.

Anyway, the Forum game is a sellout. Tickets are like gold. Better then gold, considering the way things have been going in the outside world. I happen to have a pair,

and, of course, feel very fortunate. It is like the time I was 10 years old and found a crumpled \$20 bill in the gutter at the corner of Vernon and Western. I know what it means to be lucky.

Yet, the tickets may go unused. I may give them away and merely drive around in the car listening to Chick Hearn's blow-by-blow account on the radio. Don't send the doctor. The idea isn't so psychotic.

There is more excitement in five minutes of a Hearn broadcast or telecast then in five years of sitting in person at ring-side.

Chickie, baby, is wonderful. No kidding. He is the fastest gum in the West, the best informed

and very probably the best play-by-play man in the vast world of fun and games. If his name was Hearnski, you could call him the Electric Pole.

He coaches from the microphone, calls fouls before the officials, second guesses outrageously, swoons over every missed shot, cheers and chastises with equal dedication on a machine-gun see-saw and overrides his whispering running mate, Rod Hundley, with reckless indifference.

And he magically does it all with a charm that can't help but captivate. Maybe you caught him, too, as the Lakers dropped a 120-117 overtime decision to the Celtics Tuesday night from Boston.

The cable opened and it was instant uproar, giving way gradually to sustained hysteria. Chickie, baby, was in peak form.

Leaves Fall, Sun Shines . . .

He is beautiful. He never ceases to be amazed by a 10-point rally, Russell's defense, an Elgin Baylor corkscrew drive or Jerry West playing with injuries.

He is poetic. "Russell and Havlicek are everywhere—like leaves in the fall," he said at one point.

At another, the Lakers came from far behind to take the lead in the second quarter. "The sun shines in California," cried Chick. I looked out the window. It was twilight and foggy. But you could feel the sun shining.

Darrall Imhoff, 6-10, rolled in a southpaw half-hook about seven feet. "An incredible shot, incredible,"

firm believer in the theory of



The Years in California



JOHN HALL

Chick Addict

"It was a game that left all of fandom limp," said a rapidly restored Chick Hearn, velvet voice of the Lakers and the planet Earth. He appeared to have just come off a month's vacation.

Only a moment before, the Lakers, on a typical mad dog pro basketball finish, had held on to a 105-103 decision over the New York Knicks to square their world series at one each. It was Monday night in Madison Square Garden.

Dick Barnett of the Knicks fired up a desperate footer just before the end. "The Lakers WIN," observed Chick, master of the underplay, in beating the final buzzer by several official seconds as soon as Barnett's miss settled into the hands of Keith Erickson. Anything shy of the absolute end of the world, of course, is an underplay.

"The Lakers win," Hearn repeated in hi-fi. "We go home with a split. Listen to this mob—" he shrieked. In Knickland, Hearn WAS the mob—the only happy scream in the unhappy house of 19,500. It was a routine performance by the 50-year-old tonsil out of good old Peoria's good old East Aurora High.

If you have a ticket, you no doubt will be rushing to the Forum tonight. But not me. I'm rushing to Palm Springs for the play-by-play on cable TV. I'm a Chick-a-dict. I don't think I can get through a Laker game without him.

He is a one only. Every block by Wilt Chamberlain on defense comes as an incredible surprise. Each basket by West is a new amazement.

Hearn is a one only. Every defense comes as an incredible surprise. Jerry West is a new amazement.

Hearn's contributions to society have been mentioned before. Not only does he call the quickest play-by-play in the history of mankind, he somehow finds time to also coach, officiate, teach, scold, praise, weep and laugh.

It's an exercise in emotional ping pong. Take Monday night, for instance. We began in panic and calmly progressed from there.

The opening tip: "The Lakers didn't win the first game. That's just the same as you GET the tip. The Lakers GET the tip. The Lakers GET the tip."

It's an exercise in emotion, for instance. We began in pain, progressed from there.

Lining up for the opening tip: "The Lakers didn't win a single tip in the first game. That's just the same as four turnovers. It hurts. The Lakers GET the tip. They GET it. Maybe that's a portent of better things to come." Instant sunshine. Hope.

Whatta Great Coach!

Willis Reed knee an

Whatta Great Coach!

Whatta Great Coach!

The ball goes out of bounds off a Willis Reed knee and it is handed to the Lakers: "The crowd is booing and it was the most OBVIOUS play of the season. A good call." Disdain for the stupidity of the N.Y. fans.

In the first quarter: "The Lakers are foul to give the crowd something to give away the foul." "The crowd is booing it." The Lakers score the foul.

Late in the first quarter: "New York has a foul to give away. They're NOT giving it." The Lakers score: "New York went sound asleep. They didn't give away the foul and the Lakers made them eat it." Glee. More stupidity. The Lakers are the WORST team in history in the 1st quarter." Disgust.

"The Lakers are the WORST team in the league," said Mel Counts, a former NBA player and the Lakers' first coach. "Disgust. last 10 seconds of every quarter." Disgust. "The Laker lead of nine is quickly EXPUNGED to four." Shock.

Second quarter begins. Joe Mullaney, in a routine change, takes out Elgin Baylor and Erickson for a rest and inserts Happy Hairston and Mel Counts: "What a coaching job Mullaney has done this year. Wow! UNBELIEVABLY GREAT."

West is fouled: "I've NEVER seen Jerry look so skinny. He's missed two free throws already tonight and that's more than he usually misses in a week." Fear. "Laker free throwing is ATROCIOUS."

"Laker free throw attempt wedges between the board and iron and stays there: "That's got to be a ball you've got to question the inflation of." Double dribble. "Laker free throwing is HORRENDOUS." Joy. "No, they work through the ball away!"

JIM MURRAY

Hearn: a Snap, a Crackle and a Popcorn Machine

"Top of the key to Baylor! Give to West! Dribble-drive to the right on a give-and-go to the base! Eighteen-and-a-half-foot jump er! No good! Rebound to Baylor! Seven-foot fall-away, up and in, and HE SCORES and HE'S FOULED! Oh, WAIT A MINUTE! Gushue is calling TRAVELING! Elgin was knocked six feet into the floor by Embry and the ref calls TRAVELING! Ladies and gentlemen, in all my years in basketball, I have

NEVER seen a
call like that one.
OK, ball in-bounds
by the Royals..."

The foregoing is not the Japanese naval code before cracking, the Farewell Address by Casey Stengel or a new translation of Ovid. It's Mr. Hearn's big

boy, Chick, doing what he does better than anyone in the world—describe a basketball game over radio.

Francis Dayle Hearn is as valuable to the Los Angeles Lakers as a 90% foul-shooter or a 30-point guard. He likes and understands the game, and describes it in a way few can equal and none surpass.

Lakers' '12th Man'

s that typical 20th century
enon, the sports broadcast-
less a part of an independ-
stry than an integral part
n. He is the Lakers' 12th
oad trips, when the Lak-
find the coach they find
is as ready with advice,
d opinion as the general
le worries about the
nson, Elgin Baylor's
Vest's weight, and Gail
percentage from the
much as coach Fred
fan in the rafter seat.
as been slow to catch
precisely because
ugh Chick Hearn's.
Chick hatched it.
; Graham McNa-
ame and early in
nt would as soon

field a team without a third-baseman today as without a broadcaster.

Football had the colorful Ted Husing, who brought to the game a dramatic extension—and a purple vocabulary—that contributed more to its popularity than Red Grange. A "whole host" of tacklers—whatever that meant—brought down the ball-carrier. The "tertiary" was added to the defense.

Chick Hearn does no less for basketball. He can talk faster than a guy caught kissing his secretary. He can criticize officials freely because he once was one. He knows basketball from the burned-lung point of view. He was once both forward and guard for Aurora (Ill.) College, and on an industrial AAU team in the days when that phase of the game far outdrew the National Basketball Assn.

Syllable Behind

He is most famous for having players "faked into the popcorn machine," but Hearn's invention does not stop there. He's never more than a syllable behind the action. The "dribble-drive," "give-and-go" are Hearn-ese, not basketball-ese. Any game needs imaginative synonyms for standard plays—"red dog" for a three-man rush, "hummer" for fastball, and "she's going, going, GONE!" for a dramatic home run instead of just simply "and Snyder hits a home run."

Chick started broadcasting to supplement his income as a pharmaceutical supplies salesman. He got five dollars a game, and state high school tournaments were an annual bonanza because he could make as much as \$40 a day until NBC beckoned him from Peoria to Los Angeles in 1956. Chick came out for a look, and, once he saw the Pacific, he turned in his aspirin and hot-water bags, and pharmacy has been on its own ever since.

His value to the Lakers is such that owner Jack Cooke re-wired the Sports Arena so fans could see the real game and hear the Hearn game, which is frequently the more exciting of the two. Chick also helps Elgin Baylor's game considerably. That's because he's a terrible gin rummy player.

TV TALK

An L.A. sports broadcaster is giving the networks a run for their adjectives

The networks, which usually appear dedicated to the proposition that sports announcing must be bland, humorless and uninformed, seem to forget sometimes that they are no longer the only game in town. As a consequence, the regimented network stars are regularly embarrassed in head-to-head exposure against local announcers who show some individuality and understanding of the action they are describing. Nowhere is the contrast more evident than in the second-largest TV market in the land, where the dominant sports voice belongs to a man who has thrived for a decade by being outrageously and stylishly himself.

Chick Hearn, the voice of the Los Angeles Lakers, stands at the top of his profession today. As handsome and sure-throated as his network colleagues, he exhibits perception and wit as well. In Southern California he is so appreciated that his fans refuse to do without him, with the result that he is forced to simulcast—broadcast radio and TV play-by-play at the same time. A large number of Laker fans require even more assurance; they bring transistors, tuned to Hearn, to the home games. Vin Scully of the Dodgers was responsible for starting this phenomenon, but baseball is a languid, chatty sport that enables an announcer to assert his personality with relative ease. Accomplishing the same thing during the constant action of a basketball game must be more difficult. In any case, the transistor habit would seem to attest equally to Hearn's announcing talent and to the insecurity of the average Laker follower as he watches his team in person.

Considering the relatively recent popularity of big-time basketball, it is a minor anomaly that there are probably more good announcers covering this sport today than there are good baseball or football players. Hearn explains this by pointing to the popularity of high school basketball and football, in which budding announcers find a training ground that baseball cannot offer. Basketball broadcasters also frankly admit that once you're into it, calling basketball is easier than many other sports. Perhaps most important, basketball commentary has not suffered from the petrifying effects of long repetition as much as baseball and football announcing have. It is easier to wing it a little in basketball, and the best young men are naturally drawn to a sport that gives them a chance to vent their talents. In the NBA alone there is a profusion of good young play-by-play men—notably Jim Karvellas in Baltimore, Skip Caray in Atlanta and Andy Musser in Philadelphia.

Hearn has had an influence not only in his field but on the game itself. Some of his phrases have drifted into domain; for example, "no-harm," "yo-yoing" and "corkscrew" are original Chickisms. His latest, "drive," also seems destined for a place in the lexicon of modern terminology.

As slick and humorous as Hearn is, however, his ability to transcend cliché and deep knowledge of which he refreshes with tedious day—is his outstanding attribute. Network men, who are reluctant to give more than confirmations of Hearn's whole approach is to guess, to increase his interest and understanding with heavy infusions of speculation and confident expertise. "Anti-anticipation," he says. "That's the whole secret, the important thing." Often citing facts before the referees do, Hearn is .900 on such calls. And he is coming up with some bit of monologue to the listener as clear a picture of the action as he could get by eavesdropping on the sideline huddle. Take this type of comments from a recent broadcast.

"... over to Clark on the floor. They are trying to work something out. There goes Jackson on the floor. Clark sees him, but Wilt is on Jackson. Archie throws the ball underneath, but the Lakers foul. That won't be on Wilt but on Clark. Coming over from the side. It is on McMillian, and an foul because Jim did not see. He dropped back and thought he had fouled Jackson by himself."

Since Hearn rid himself of the clichés—at his worst, he called the NBA's greatest two-rebounder—"the only sub-remaining is that he over-comes the man. Which he does. Also, of thumb, the more guys you have, the worse the broadcast. Confident abilities of most network announcers understandable why the safe approach enjoys such a vocal following. The strongest performance turned in where one man.

Almost every form of sports announcing is falling back on the same old, same old approach: low-brow, first-person journalism, self-deprecatory comments. Our Gang television network's approach sometimes invites "inside," too-cute presentation. It is proposed to substitute for these ages to avoid these pitfalls a brand of personal expression, happily, the future.

(Sports Illustrated)

JOHN HALL

Chick Chirps On...

"He's pinned in there like meat in a hamburger sandwich," shouted the man on the mike. A horn sounded. "I'll be back in a minute with the pulsating fourth quarter," said the announcer.

He was hardly overconfident. The Lakers led by 10 but fear and doubt were still haunting the backcourt. "This is hostile territory," reminded the voice. "I haven't seen an Indian yet, but there are plenty of rocks just outside the building."

It was merely Francis Dayle Hearn, the walking-talking nervous breakdown, doing his usual thing. It was Saturday night in Phoenix, triumph No. 24 in the Laker streak, and it seemed like a good time for our annual check on the most colossal, fantastic, incredible, amazing, electric piece of play-by-play machinery on radio, television or megaphone.

He's also known alternately as Chick, Chickie Baby or Mr. Popcorn Machine. Mostly, he's known fondly. At age 51 or thereabouts, he's doing and has done the same sort of thing for the Lakers that Vin Scully did and does for the Dodgers.

"And they're going crazy in the madhouse," he said just before the opening tip against the Suns. Phoenix scored off the tip. "The worst of the Laker weaknesses has been exploited again," said Chick. Faster than a speeding bullet, he leaps over tall adjectives at a single bound.

His exaggeration is outlandish. He also coaches, officiates, teaches, pre-guesses and second-guesses unashamedly while alertly and accurately doing what he's paid to do—describe the play on the floor. The rest is a bonus.

The Lakers move into a decisive 16-point lead early in the final quarter. "Remember last Friday when the Suns rallied in the same spot and put it into overtime," Chick warned.

"The Suns have been eclipsed!" he crowed later, finally admitting it was over 2½ minutes before the buzzer made the 132-106 rout official. "And now it's the great 76ers and Brilliant Billy Cunningham at the Fabulous Forum," Chick worried, a new panic already at hand.

★

"Overstatement is a bad habit. I know that a certain move or a certain game is not the greatest in history. But things like that just pop out. . . . I tend to forget in the middle of the action that this is just the present," he once said in analyzing his own style.

"But don't misunderstand. I'm not making excuses. I'm an honest reporter," he said.



Chick Hearn

Chick's Favorite Games

Sometimes I may go a little overboard in applying the term "greatest" during a Laker broadcast. But some games do have a way of staying with you—and I'm not just talking about games that the Lakers have won. Longtime fans know that the Lakers of the 60s carries the same reputation that the Brooklyn Dodgers bore through their many World Series appearances—the perennial runner-up that came so close, yet so far from winning the big prize. But the drama was no less evident during these trying times.

As a matter of fact, many of the games that I would call the greatest in Laker history were **not** winning games, beginning with the Lakers' first playoff engagement in Los Angeles and running through the disheartening playoff appearances against Boston and New York.

Herewith I present my own list of memorable games—including four the Lakers did not win:

March 29, 1961: Hawks 114, Lakers 113—

This is the game that I say assured the success of pro ball in L.A. A crowd of 14,484—a Sports Arena record at that time—watched St. Louis win game six of the Western Division finals in overtime despite Elgin's 39 points and what appeared to be the birth of Jerry in a familiar role—Mr. Clutch. Jerry hit two jumpers in the last frantic minute of that overtime to give the Lakers leads of 109-108 and 111-110, the last lead with 24 seconds left. But Bob Petit scored with 13 seconds left, and then Al Ferrari stole a Lakers' inbound pass and sank a basket to give the Hawks a 114-111 lead with virtually no time left on the clock.

Jerry did end the game on an ominous note—he popped a long jumper at the buzzer to make the final score 114-113. There should have been the ABA three-point basket rule then, and the Lakers would have ended the series on West's jumper.

December 8, 1961: Lakers 151, Warriors 147

—Wilt dominated the headlines in this one even though the Lakers won the game. The big fella scored 78 points in a triple overtime game to erase the one-game scoring mark of 71, set



Gail Goodrich

the year before by Elgin Baylor. Elgin didn't have a bad night either with 63 points, but that was never really noticed in the excitement over Wilt's achievement. After the game I went up to Elgin and said, "It's not fair. Wilt had three overtimes—an extra 15 minutes—to get his 78 points." Elgin didn't mind. "What's the difference," he said. "Some day the big fella will go out and score 100." Elgin was right. Chamberlain hit the century mark less than three months later against New York.

April 11, 1962: Lakers 117, Celtics 115.—

Jerry truly became Mr. Clutch in this game. The Lakers looked hopelessly down with Boston leading 115-111 and just 31 seconds left. But Jerry hit a basket to cut the lead. Then Tommy Heinsohn missed one of his favorite bank shots and Jerry brought the ball down court for a one-on-one duel against Bill Russell. Bill fouled Jerry and Mr. Clutch sank two free throws to tie the game with just three seconds left. He wasn't done. The Celtics took



Kareem Abdul-Jabbar

the ball out at midcourt following a timeout and Sam Jones wanted to get the ball to Bob Cousy. Jerry wouldn't allow it. He stepped in, stole the ball and raced downcourt for a layup that gave the Lakers the win and a 2-1 lead in the first championship series between L.A. and Boston. Jerry left the court weeping with joy and Cousy left the floor weeping with sorrow. The other Celtics might have wept too, but their frustration was directed at the locker room—they could not get in because somehow the doors were locked! The frustration of that game, however, never left Red Auerbach. He maintained that Jerry never made it to the hoop within three seconds. He timed the game movies over and over gain. And each time it came out the same. I think Jerry made it in 2.9 seconds—plus a few hundredths of seconds.

April 14, 1962: Lakers, 126, Celtics 121—
This was a vintage Elgin Baylor game. Elgin

CHICK'S LEXICON:

Caught with his hands in the cookie jar—used to describe a defender reaching in or harrassing a player and getting called for a foul.

Heartbreak—A type of shot which generally goes "in and out" of the basket.

Hung Him out to Dry—A player driving around his defender for an easy two points. It usually suggests that the offensive man had no trouble in getting by his opponent.

In the refrigerator—The term applied to a game so far out of reach that the team ahead will win the game. It's "in the refrigerator."

Like Money in the Bank—Safe. A sure shot such as a slam dunk by Kareem Abdul-Jabbar.

No harm, no foul—One of the original phrases. A play during the course of a game involving physical contact—but not enough to warrant a foul being whistled.

Faked Into the Popcorn Machine—Another Hearn original. When the offensive player executes such a beautiful fake that his defender gets caught in the air.

Pressure Cooker—A close tight important game—which goes down to the final minutes of play where everything is on the line.

Words and Phrases of Chick Hearn which he used to describe, discuss and detail the game of basketball.

The Mustard Came Off the Hot Dog—Used to describe a player's action when he tries a fancy play. "The Mustard Came off the Hot Dog" on that pass.

Words Eye View—Radio broadcast phrase describing Chick's type of announcing.

Yo-yoing Up and Down—When a guard dribbles the ball up court, it's like the ball is on a yo-yo string. Consequently, the guard is yo-yoing the ball up and down.

Motorcycle in a Motordome—When the ball sits on the rim, and may even go around and around on the rim—but it doesn't go in.

Dribble Drive—Another Hearn original. It's what a player does when he puts the ball on the floor and heads toward the basket.

Unanswered points—This is another phrase Chick coined. If one team scores ten consecutive points....they have also scored ten "unanswered points."

Give and Go—Yet another phrase Hearn originated. When a player passes the ball to a teammate and heads for the basket, looking for a return pass, it is said to be called a, "give and go."

dazzled a partisan Boston Garden crowd of 13,909 with a 61-point performance and he scored on shots of every conceivable variety. He got 15 of those in the final quarter, including a 15-footer that put the Lakers ahead for good. Actually, Elgin came precariously close to sitting through the contest. He picked up three fouls in the first quarter and sat down much of the time in early going. But at the end he drew a standing ovation from the hostile Bostonians. I will never forget that.

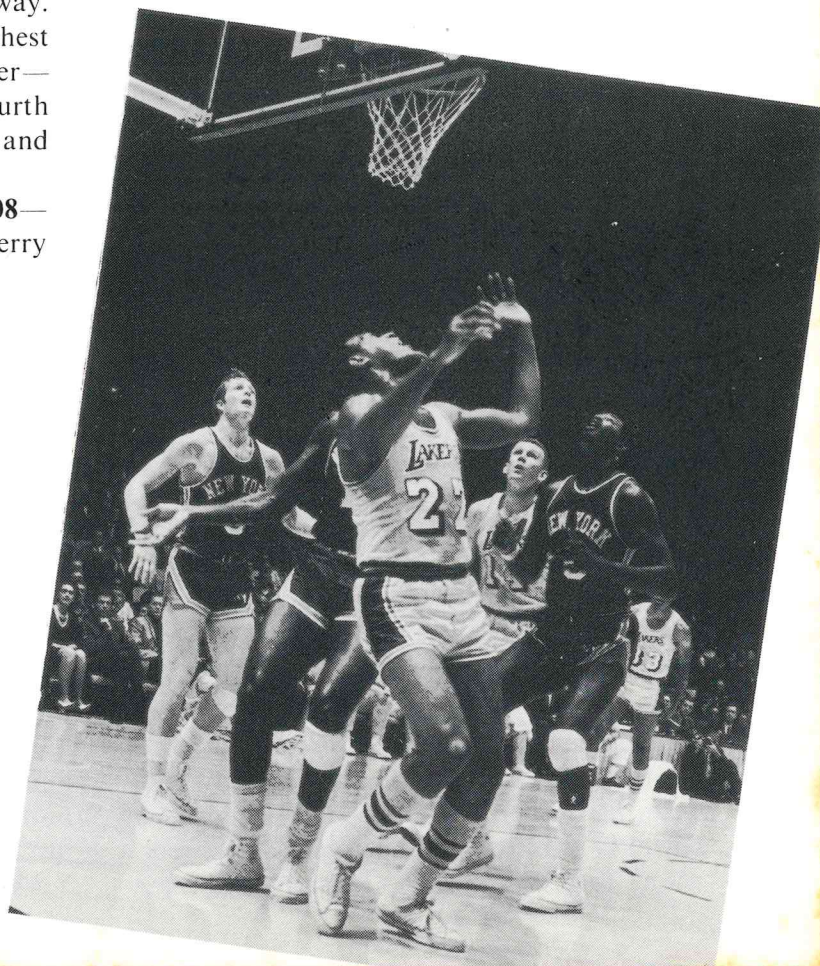
April 18, 1962: Celtics 110, Lakers 107— Another game the Lakers came ever so close to winning, and the first one with the NBA championship on the line. It was the seventh and final game of the championship series with Boston. The game was rescheduled a day early because of Elgin's army commitments. Elgin scored 41 and Jerry got 35 in this game, but they were not the pivotal figures at the finish. Frank Selvy—whom the Lakers obtained the year before because of his playoff experience—hit two baskets off of steals by Jerry to tie the game at 100 with just 18 second left. Frank had one more chance—a 12-foot bank from the left of the key—just as the clock was running out. But talk about in and out heartbreaks—the ball bounded off the hoop and, as it turned out, L.A. had to wait 10 more years for an NBA title. Bill Russell led Boston in the overtime period and the Lakers trailed most of the way. Russell said afterwards that it was the toughest game of that season—perhaps of his career—and I believe him. At the end of the fourth quarter, Bill ran right off the court and grabbed an oxygen mask.

April 29, 1970: Knicks 111, Lakers 108— This is the famous playoff game that saw Jerry

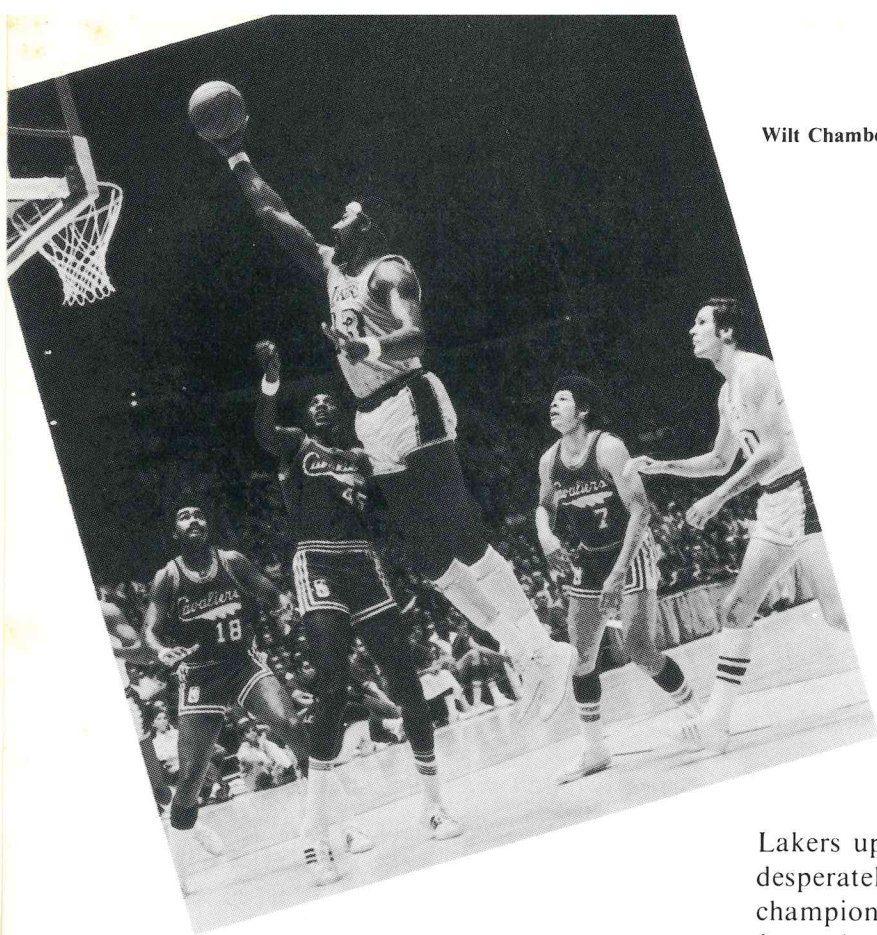
hit his 63-footer to send the contest into overtime. I have described the shot in other portions of the book, but the drama of the feat obviously swept everyone in the Forum that night. One of those was Wilt. When Jerry hit that shot, Wilt ran over and embraced him, then took off for the locker room. He thought Jerry's shot won the ball game, when in reality the score was 102-102 with five more minutes of overtime awaiting. Mike Lynn, a substitute forward, had to scamper back to the locker room to retrieve Wilt before the disheartening over-time period could be played.

December 10, 1971: Lakers 126, Suns 117— Though the score may not indicate a memorable game, this one certainly was, for it enabled the Lakers to tie the record for the longest winning streak up to that time, and was the last big obstacle enroute to 33 in a row. The Lakers very nearly didn't win their 20th in a row to tie the Milwaukee Bucks for the win streak record, and if they had lost, you can forget all the talk about their eventual 33-game win streak.

This was the toughest game the Lakers had during their record-setting win skein. Mel Counts returned in a Phoenix uniform to tie the game at 111 with just 31 seconds left, and



Elgin Baylor



Wilt Chamberlain

Connie Hawkins nearly ended the streak when his 20-footer hit the front of the rim at the buzzer. The Lakers still looked somewhat lethargic in overtime but Gail Goodrich hit three bombs from long range to put the Lakers out of reach down the stretch.

It seemed the Lakers always had someone to turn to during that streak. With all the talk during Wilt's career about his scoring ability, it is somewhat surprising to learn that he led the team in scoring only once during the 33-game streak. The leading scorer changed from night to night. That kind of lift is important when you travel as often as an NBA team does. And that's another reason why I say the streak will not be surpassed. With the league as large as it is today, it's hard to ask every man to be ready to contribute down the stretch—particularly on a long road trip.

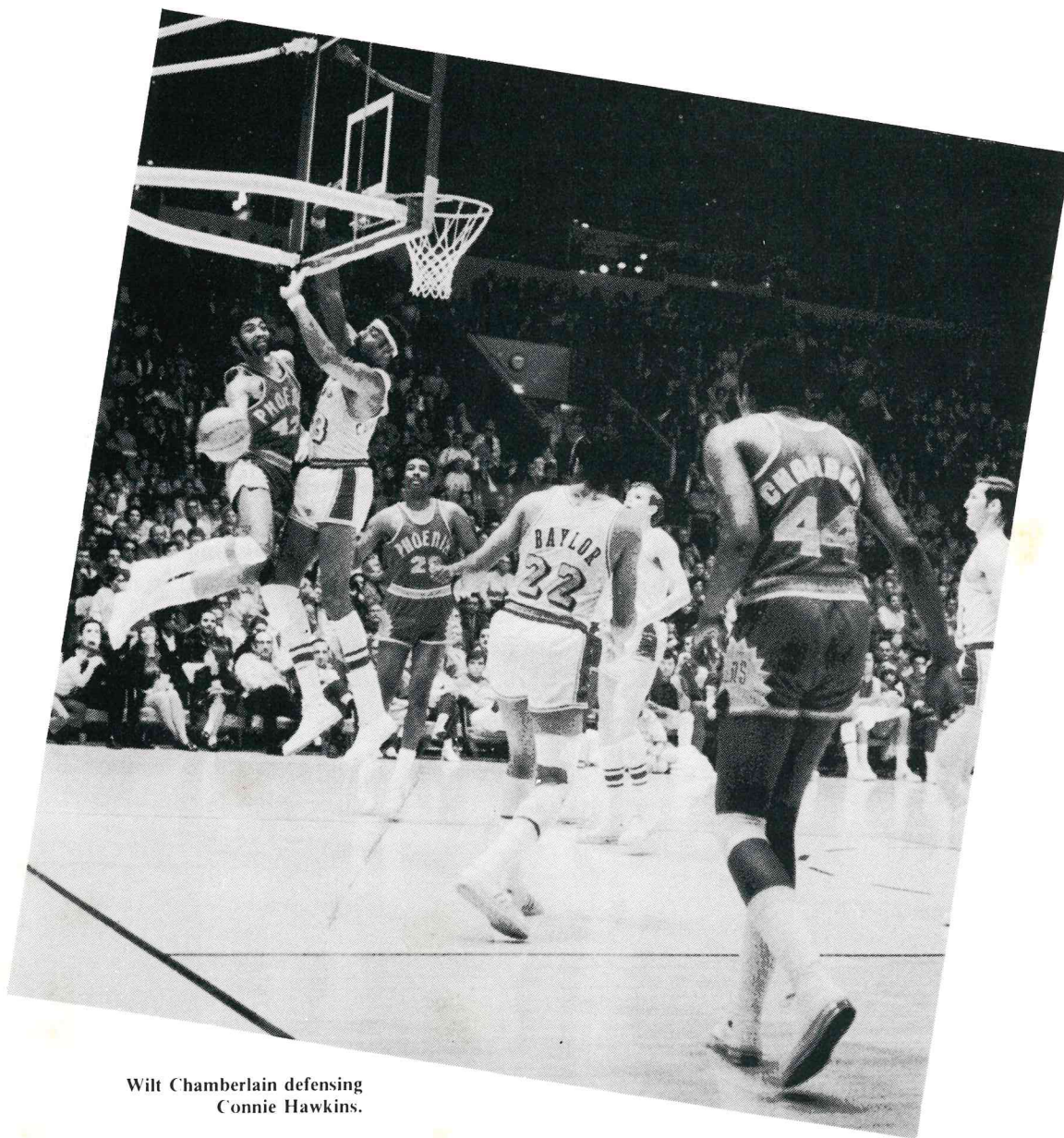
May 7, 1972: Lakers 114, Knicks 100—This game finally laid to rest the old story that the Lakers couldn't win the big one. I'll never forget the happiness in Jerry West's face after the big game, which contrasted so sharply with the deep sorrow everyone read about after playoff losses to the Celtics and Knicks. And it was a memorable night for Wilt. There was speculation that Wilt might not be available for the game because of an extremely sore wrist. Dr. Robert Kerlan, the man who helped so many athletes on the road to recovery, wasn't sure Wilt could go out there with the

Lakers up 3-1 and a home crowd wanting so desperately to see Los Angeles win a world championship. But Wilt played, and played fantastically well. He scored 24 points and dominated the boards with 29 rebounds. Jerry later said Wilt was "simply the guy that got us here," and he was right. He also said that he never thought the Lakers could get past Chicago or Milwaukee when the season began. But it was destined to be a Lakers season all the way. All those records, plus a world championship, too—it was the perfect end to a near-perfect year.

April 15, 1973: Lakers 95, Bulls 92—I often use the phrase, "Comeback time at the Forum," when the Lakers make a last-minute run at their opponent, but this game tops the long list of Laker comebacks. Chicago led most of the way in this seventh and final game of the Western Division championships, but with the Bulls ahead 92-91 and only 28 seconds left, Wilt blocked a shot by Norm Van Lier and fed Gail Goodrich for the layup that gave the Lakers their last showdown with the New York Knicks for the NBA title. It took a miracle for the Lakers to survive. In the last two minutes, the Lakers stole the ball three times and got points all three times to pull out the game. Jerry hit two free throws in the last seconds to account for the final victory margin. But once the Lakers got into the finals, they were snake-bit again. I've seen Jerry West suffer many injuries, but it was sadly ironic to see him injure **both** of his hamstring muscles as the Lakers lost that year's championship series to New York, 4-1.

January 29, 1980: Cavaliers 154, Lakers 153 (4 OT)—The Lakers make news even when they lose a January game in Cleveland. The game goes four overtimes and the Lakers set an NBA record for points by a losing team when they're edged 154-153. I'll remember it a long time because it was the first time ex-Laker assistant Stan Albeck, who's so popular with the guys, defeated his former team. It had to be the high-light of his coaching year in Cleveland. Another interesting aspect of the game: Norm Nixon proved that little guys can have a lot of stamina too. He played 64 of a possible 68 minutes.

May 16, 1980: Lakers 123, 76ers 107—Nobody really knew what to expect with Kareem sidelined by an ankle injury. But when Magic jumped center to start the game, you knew something special was happening. Magic even replaced Kareem on the airplane going to Philly, taking Kareem's favorite front row seat and putting a blanket over his head the way the Captain would. In the game, it was a true Magic show. And wasn't it typical that Jamaal Wilkes scored 37 points, yet it was virtually ignored because Magic had made 42. In his silent way, Jamaal was a hero too.



Wilt Chamberlain defending
Connie Hawkins.



My Owner, My Coach, My Captain...

Although the closest she has come to participation is to produce some pieces for the program, Marge Hearn is as much a member of the Lakers family as anyone. If Chick has broadcast more than 1,800 games since joining the team late in its first season in the Los Angeles area 21 years ago, including the last 1,400 and more without missing one over 13 years, Marge's attendance has been similarly remarkable. She seldom misses a game.

In these days of divorce, Chick and Marge have a marriage that has endured 40 years as of last August. They have gone through good times and bad times and seem to me to be as close as the day they joined the team in 1961. When the team is in town they are inseparable. And she doesn't just go to the games to be with him. She loves the Lakers and basketball as much as he does and has been close to more than one hundred players' wives who have passed through the organization.

The attractive redhead is a strong woman—active, opinionated, determined. Most around the Lakers and the Press Room know her well without knowing much about her.

Chick and Marge were schooldays sweethearts in Aurora, Illinois, both the children of railroad men, both growing up in the depression during hard times. Marge was a Wilson, distant cousin to World War I President Woodrow Wilson. But her father had to drive a laundry truck on the side to support his family of eight daughters and three sons. Her mother had all she could do to take care of 11

children.

"We didn't have a lot of money, but we had a lot of love," Marge recalls. "We needed more room than we could afford to rent, so we built our own house from the foundation up. The kids helped, pouring cement and so forth. My parents had a bedroom and we kids had four bedrooms. We slept two or three to a room. We took care of chores."

"The older children had a lot of responsibility for the younger ones and I was third from the top. At 13, while I was in high school, I lied that I was 16 and got a job selling hosiery at Kresge's Dollar Store. After graduation, I managed a hosiery store. Three years after graduation I married Chick and left home and started a new home."

Chick had been attending a Catholic school in town, but his family could not afford the fees so he switched to a public school, East Aurora High, where Marge was in the same class. When he became a basketball star at East, the Catholic school offered him a scholarship, but he refused to return. Francis Dale Hearn—"Rankie" before he was "Chick"—was an outstanding all-around athlete in high school and AAU ball.

So was Marge, which may surprise some of her closest friends. She ran track and was the best girl's basketball player of her senior year in Illinois. She was one of the few women in those years to be offered even a partial athletic scholarship to college, but had to decline an offer from Ohio State because her family

needed the money she could bring in by working.

"I don't know that Chick and I went to many dances or parties," she recalls, smiling wistfully. "We went to each other's games. We had hamburgers and milk shakes after games and went home. If others were smoking or drinking or staying up half the night, we didn't even know about it. We had our own life and we had each other."

They married in August of 1938 when he was playing AAU ball, officiating high school and college games, and working as a credit analyst. They were apart during World War II, where he began his broadcasting career while in special services in the south Pacific. Back home, he sold pharmaceuticals before he got back into broadcasting.

She went with him from Aurora to Peoria and on to L.A. He was very big on the NBC network for awhile, doing different sports, but left to remain with the Lakers. Marge says, "Chick has made good money and we have lived comfortably, but he could have made more money and had an easier life if he'd stayed with the network. Maybe because we did not have much money in our early lives, we still live simply. Chick thrives on work. Although the Lakers have an exhausting schedule, he still takes on all the things on the side he can.

"As long as he is happy, I am happy. I've gotten used to being apart from him a week or two at a time. I'm almost ashamed to admit it, but I look forward to these separations sometimes. It gives me time to do my own things. I call or write my brothers and sisters, all of whom are alive and scattered to the winds. Three of my sisters are artists. All the children

are successful in one way or another. I used to play a lot of golf. These days I do a lot of arts and crafts. I think that having our own spaces has helped our marriage, although we are rarely apart when he is home."

They live in the Encino hills in a peaceful place with lovely views. Chick relaxes landscaping and gardening. They had a son, Gary, who died, but have a daughter, Samantha, who is single, active, and a large part of their lives. A former model, she runs Samantha's Antique Shop in Westchester. She produced dad's five-times-a-week "Bowling for Dollars" TV show and would like to get into television production.

Always close to the Lakers wives, Marge has by now become a sort of mother-hen to the current crop. "The first bunch with Ruby Baylor and Jane West and the rest were closer to my age and so we were closer," she smiles. "But this is the closest and best bunch we've had since then. We get together a lot, but we don't put on the charity fashion shows and affairs the old gang did because this bunch has a bunch of babies."

She is writing features on the wives for the programs this season. She goes to all the home games. She even criticizes Chick on occasion. "If I hear him saying something I don't think is right, I'll tell him, and he'll listen," she says. "For example, he used to call a certain type of easy layup a 'cripple.' Some still say it, but I thought he should find another expression and he did."

"After all, we're in this together," the redhead says with a smile.

"She is my owner, my coach and my captain," comments Chick.

BILL LIBBY



Left to right:
Chick's mother,
Mrs. Wm. Paul
Samantha Hearn
Shannon Hearn



That Man is a Success

Who has lived well,
laughed often and loved much;

Who has gained the respect
of intelligent men
and the love of children;

Who has filled his niche
and accomplished his task;

Who leaves the world better
than he found it,
whether by an improved poppy,
a perfect poem
or a rescued soul;

Who never lacked appreciation
of earth's beauty
or failed to express it;

Who looked for the best in others
and gave the best he had.



NO
HARM-
NO
FOUL!

HE
DIDN'T
DRAW
IRON...

YO-YO'S
THE
BALL...

THE
MUSTARD
JUST CAME
OFF THE
HOT
DOG!

GIVE
AND
GO!

Chickie
Bird's
Nest

SCORED
OFF THE
GARBAGE!

LOGE 28

TICKY
TACKY
FOUL!

DRIBBLE
DRIVE...

FAKED HIM
INTO THE
POPCORN
MACHINE-

... GOT
BUTTER AND
SALT ALL
OVER HIM!

IT'S AN
AIR
BALL...

HEARTBREAK
SHOT...

CONGRATULATIONS
CHICK!

KAP
HUBENTHAC